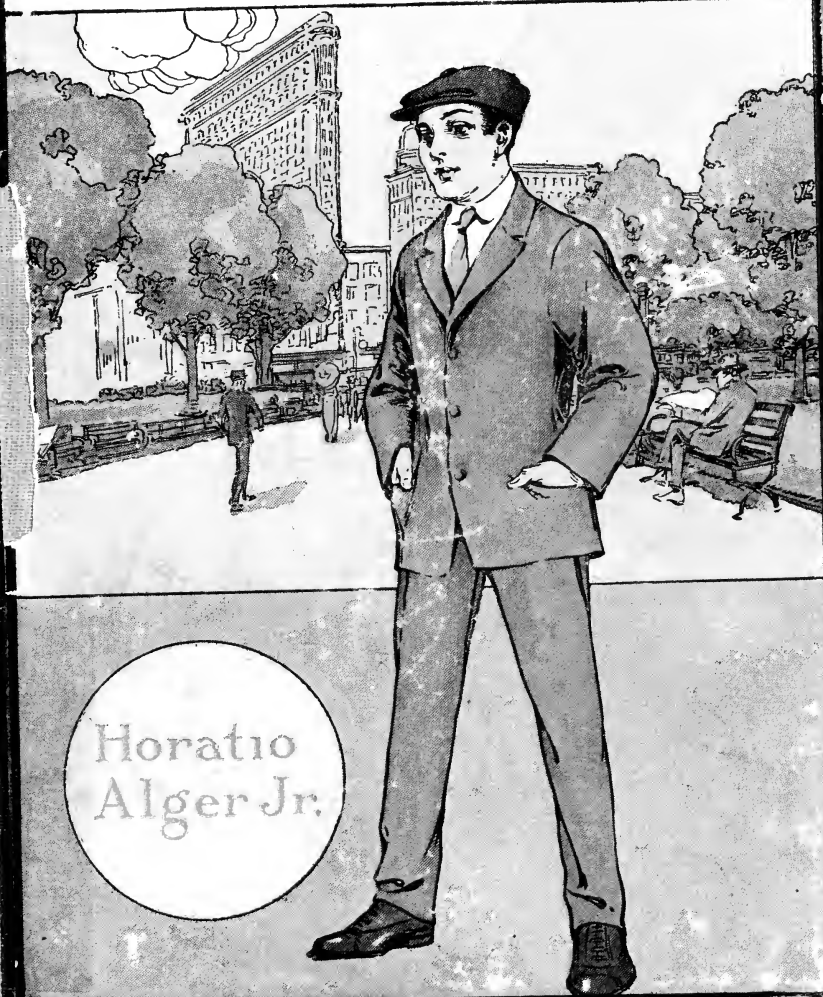
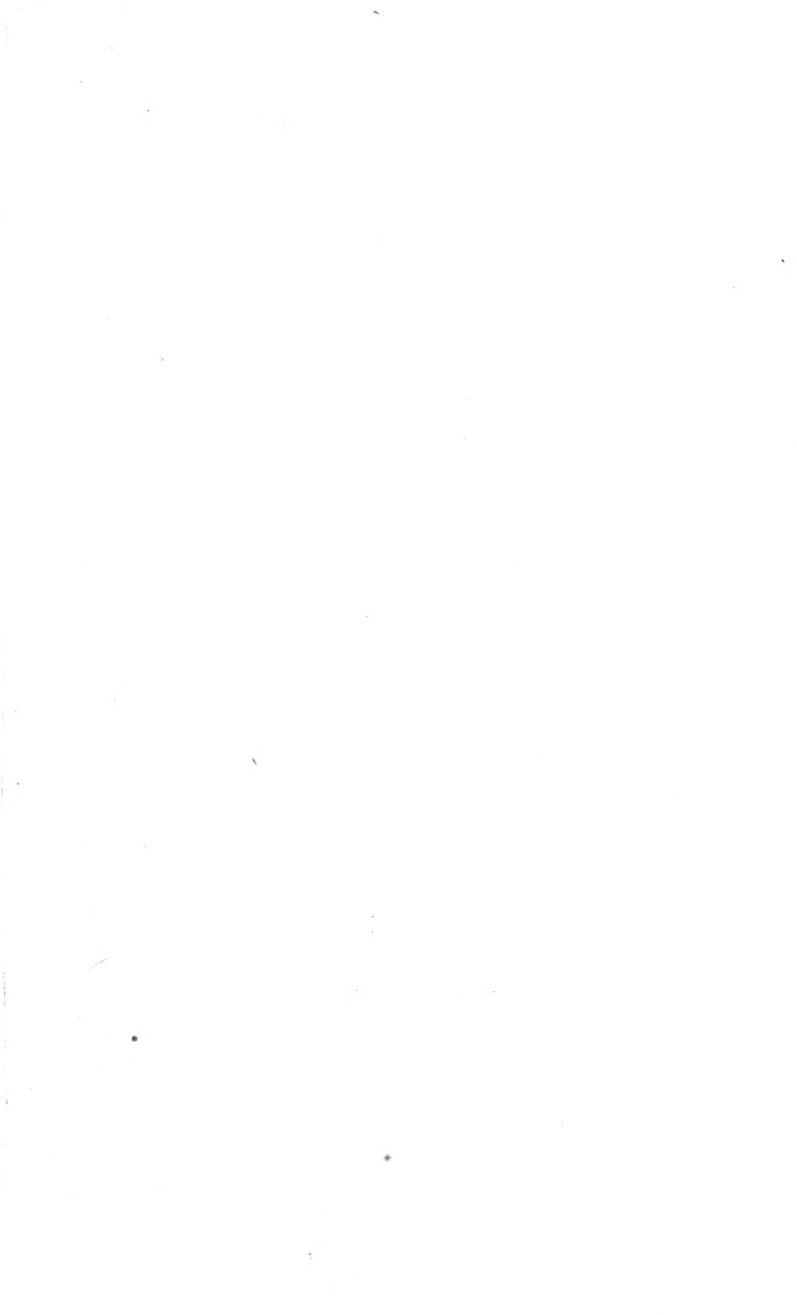


IN SEARCH OF TREASURE



Horatio
Alger Jr.





IN SEARCH OF TREASURE

By HORATIO ALGER, JR.

Author of "Mark Manning's Mission,"
"Tom Temple's Career," "Tom Thatcher's Fortune,"
"Tom Turner's Legacy," Etc.



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IN SEARCH OF TREASURE

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In Search of Treasure

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCES GUY AND HIS FATHER

"I WISH I could send you to college, Guy," said Mr. Fenwick, as they sat in the library, reading by the soft light of a student lamp.

The speaker was the Rev. Mr. Fenwick, the pastor of a church in Bayport, a few miles from New Bedford, Massachusetts.

"I don't think I care much about going to college, father," said Guy, a bright, manly, broad-shouldered boy of sixteen.

"When I was of your age, Guy," replied his father, "I was already a student of Harvard. You are ready for college, but my means are not sufficient to send you there."

"Don't worry about that, father. There are other paths to success than through college."

"I am rather surprised to hear you speak so

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indifferently, Guy. At the academy you are acknowledged to be the best Latin and Greek scholar they have had for years."

"That may be, father."

"It is so. The principal so assured me, and he would not misrepresent just to please me."

"I am glad that I have so good a reputation."

"With such qualifications it seems certain you would achieve success in college, graduate high, and, in time, become a distinguished professional man, or perhaps professor."

"Perhaps I might; but, father, in spite of my taste for study, I have one taste still stronger."

"What is that?"

"A taste for adventure. I want to see the world, to visit strange countries, to become acquainted with strange people."

As the boy spoke his face became flushed and animated.

Mr. Fenwick looked surprised.

"Certainly," he said, "you don't get this taste from me. When I was a boy I used to stay indoors to read and study. I cared nothing for the sports and games that interested my school companions."

Guy smiled.

"I believe you, father," he said. "You don't go out half enough now. Instead of shutting your

self up in your study, you would be stronger and healthier if you would walk five miles a day."

Mr. Fenwick slightly shuddered.

He was a pale, thin man, with an intellectual look, but had the air of a scholar and a recluse.

"I couldn't do it, Guy," he said. "Even if I walk a mile, I feel that it is a hardship. It is tame and monotonous. I don't see where you get your red cheeks and exuberant spirits from."

"From my mother's family, I think, father."

"Very likely. Your mother was bright and animated when I married her, but she broke down under the manifold duties and engagements of a minister's wife."

"That is true. Poor mother!"

Guy sighed, and his bright face looked sorrowful, for it was only a twelvemonth since his mother was laid away in the little graveyard at Bayport.

"You look very much like your uncle George, your mother's brother, as he was at your age."

"He became a sailor?"

"Yes. He had an extraordinary love for the sea. If he had been content to live on land and follow some mercantile business, he would, in all probability, be living to-day."

"How did he die?"

"He took a fever at some infected port, and

died on shipboard. The poor fellow was still a comparatively young man, little more than thirty, and it seemed sad that he should be cut off at such an early age."

"Was his body brought home?"

"No. Sailors are superstitious, and they don't like to sail in a ship that has a dead body on board. So poor George was sewed up in a sack, and committed to the ocean depths. His chest was sent to us, and is stored in the attic."

"Have you ever opened it?"

"Yes, I opened it, but didn't examine the contents. Probably there was nothing except a sailor's plain outfit. As to money, George was not a man to save anything. He was extravagant and prodigal, like most of his class."

"Was he a common sailor?"

"No; he was second mate, and received fair wages. He did not have your education, but had good native talent, but nothing could divert him from his plan of going to sea."

"Well, father, I suppose there must be sailors. You would hardly want everybody to go to college?"

"No, Guy."

"Even if they were qualified."

"Still, I should not care to have my son a sailor."

"I don't care to be one, father, but I own I should like to take a single voyage—a good long one—so as to see a little of the world. I think, after that, I should be more content to settle down to some business on shore. By the way, father, is there any objection to my examining the contents of Uncle George's chest?"

"I have no objection, Guy; but I think it will hardly repay you for the time."

"My time isn't of very much importance just now. Somehow I have a great desire to see if I can find anything that will throw light on my uncle's life and character."

"Very well, Guy; do as you like. And now, I must get to work on my sermon for next Sunday. It is Friday evening, and I must make progress, as I may have one of my bad headaches to-morrow."

"Can I help you, father?" asked Guy, with a humorous smile.

Mr. Fenwick smiled, too. Though so different in temperament, he was really fond and proud of his lively son.

"I hardly think your additions would be for the edification of my people," he said.

"Perhaps they might suit some of the young folks," suggested Guy.

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"Doubtless they would. If you would like to try your hand at sermon writing you can write a sermon and submit it to me. If suitable, I will preach it, and give you credit for it."

Guy laughed.

"I'll think of it, father," he said. "I am going to make a call on one of my schoolmates, and will leave you to do your writing undisturbed."

The schoolmate with whom Guy spent his evening was Tom Todd, a boy of about his own age. He had a sister some ten years older than himself, who was a teacher in one of the Bayport schools. She, as well as Tom, liked the bright son of the minister, and he received a cordial greeting from both.

"So you have got through school life, Guy?" she said.

"Yes, Miss Todd."

"And you are fitted for college? Does your father think of Harvard for you?"

"He would like to have me go, but there are two objections in the way."

"What are they?"

"First, he can't afford the expense."

"What is the second?"

"I have no desire to go."

"That is the most important. If you really de-

sired to go, I think you could borrow money enough somewhere, for you are acknowledged to be an excellent scholar."

"Thank you for the compliment; but it is no disappointment to me not to go, though it is to my father. He is a regular bookworm, you know."

"I know that he is not practical."

"Come, Guy, let us have our game of checkers," said Tom. "Let me see, I beat you last time."

"Then it is my turn to beat you now."

The boys played for an hour and a half, then Guy rose to go.

"What is your hurry? It is early yet."

"That is true, but father is nervous, and he doesn't like to have me out after half past nine o'clock. I left him writing his sermon for Sunday."

"Why don't you offer to help him, Guy?" asked Tom, with a smile.

"I did."

"Really and truly?" said Tom, laughing.

"Yes; really and truly."

"I suppose," remarked Miss Todd, "he did not accept your offer?"

"No; he thought that what I would write would not be edifying."

"If you would write a sermon, Guy, I would go to hear it," said Tom.

"And I, too," added his sister, the teacher.

"Then I should be sure of a congregation of two. Well, I will think of it."

Guy took his hat to go.

"I will walk with you part way," said Tom. "It is pleasant out, and I shall sleep the better for a walk."

"I shall be glad of your company, Tom."

When they were outside, Tom said, "I had an object in proposing to walk with you to-night, Guy. There is something I wanted to tell you."

"Go ahead, Tom."

"I think it is something you ought to know. I was walking home from singing school the other evening, when I came up behind Deacon Crane and another member of the church, Mr. Job Wilkins. I didn't hear the first part of the conversation, but as I came within hearing I heard Deacon Crane say: 'Yes, Brother Wilkins, I have thought for some time that the best interests of the church required that we should have a younger minister, who would stir up the people and draw in a larger number.' "

Guy flushed with indignation.

"Deacon Crane said that?" he ejaculated.

"Why, he pretends to be one of father's best friends."

"I think it is a pretense," said Tom.

"Poor father! If he should hear this it would almost break his heart. He is so fond of the people here."

"It is a shame; but don't worry too much over it. I am sure the majority of the parish don't wish any change."

In spite of this assurance, Guy went home in a sober frame of mind.

CHAPTER II

WHAT GUY FOUND IN THE BLUE CHEST

MR. FENWICK was only forty-eight years old, but his sedate and scholarly manner gave him an appearance of being several years older.

It came to Guy as a shock that his father should be considered too old by his parish, and that there should be any movement in favor of a younger minister. He knew that his father was dependent on his salary, having very little property. A change would be disastrous to him.

"I wish I were rich," he thought, "so that I could relieve father from any anxiety about money matters. It is lucky I don't want to go to college, for if I did, it would be a good many years before I could even support myself."

The next morning, after breakfast, Guy thought of his sailor uncle, and the curiosity again seized him to find out the contents of the chest up in the attic.

He went up the narrow stairs leading to the

garret, and found himself in a large room covering the entire extent of the house, for the attic had never been finished off or divided into chambers. There were piles of old papers and magazines in one corner, old mildewed garments hanging from nails in the rafters, and two or three old rusty trunks.

But none of them attracted Guy's attention. He was looking for his uncle's chest.

At last he found it—a typical sailor's chest, painted blue, showing signs of wear, for it had accompanied his uncle for years.

Guy's face lighted up, and he hurried toward it.

He thought it might be locked, but he was glad to find that the lock seemed to have been broken, so that he had no difficulty in lifting the lid and examining the contents.

There was nothing unusual about these. They consisted of the plain outfit of a sailor.

There were one or two books. One of them was a Bible, which had been presented to his uncle, George by his mother at the time he left home on his first voyage.

Guy lifted it carefully, for he had been taught to reverence the Bible. Then he saw underneath, an envelope of large size, unmarked on the outside.

Opening this, he found a large sheet of paper, folded lengthwise, with writing upon it. Lying inside was a smaller piece of paper, also written over, the handwriting being that of his uncle George.

This Guy read first. The contents interested him exceedingly.

The paper is subjoined.

What I am writing here may or may not be of interest or value, yet it may prove of importance to those who may read it, though it is possible this will not be till after my death. Last year (from the date Guy saw that it was the year before his death) among my mates on the good ship Cyprus was a dark, thin man, the darkest in complexion, I think, that I ever met outside the negro race.

No one on board knew him, nor did any of us get well acquainted with him, for he was very silent and reserved, and did not care to make friends or confidants. Yet he did his duty well. No fault could be found with him. He did not become a favorite, as he did not care to talk or be sociable with the rest of the sailors. We could not help respecting him, however, as one who strictly minded his

own business, and never in any way interfered with others.

This man's name was Antonio Smith, or Tony, as we should have called him if we had been sufficiently intimate. The two names did not go well together, and one day I asked him why it was that he had two such names.

"It is easily explained," he said. "My father was an Englishman, named Smith, but my mother was an Italian woman."

"That explains your being so dark," I said.

"Yes, I suppose so," he answered.

He did not confide in me to any further extent. As far as I could observe, he seemed moody and morbid. It seemed as if he had something on his mind—something of a disagreeable nature.

Well, toward the end of the voyage he had a bad fall. He was helping to furl sails when another sailor above him lost his hold, and fell on him. This made Antonio lose his hold also, and he dropped to the deck, striking his head.

It is a wonder he was not immediately killed. As it was he was fatally injured, as it proved, and was removed to his bunk in a dying condition. I pitied the poor fellow, and as much time as my duties would permit I spent at his side, trying to make him comfortable.

One evening he looked at me earnestly, and asked: "Do you think that I can live, George?"

I shook my head. "I don't want to deceive you," I answered, "and I will tell you the truth."

"It is what I want to hear," he said.

"The doctor says you can't live."

He showed no agitation, but said, thoughtfully: "That is what I thought."

After a pause he continued: "Before I die there is something I want to confide to someone. You have been a friend to me, and you are the one I choose, if you don't mind, to listen to what I have to say."

"I will hear it," I said, "and if it is a message to anyone in whom you are interested I will engage to deliver it, if possible."

"No, there is no one in whom I am interested," he answered. "All who once knew me are dead, or at all events are dead to me. But I have a secret which I once thought would be of value to me, and may be of value to you, whom I constitute my heir."

All this seemed very queer to me, and I half thought that the sick man might be wandering in mind. He went on: "You must know, George, and this is my first secret, that for five years I sailed under the black flag, and was a pirate!"

I looked astounded, as well I might, and he continued:

“I see you look surprised, but you are not more surprised than I was when I found myself enrolled as a member of a piratical crew. I shipped on board the Vulture, supposing it to be an ordinary merchantman. It was not till I got well out to sea that I learned the true character of the vessel. Then I was asked to sign as a member of the crew, and knowing well it would be dangerous to refuse, I agreed.

“After a while I got reconciled, in a measure, to my position. I found it more profitable than the post of an ordinary seaman, and yet not so much so as might be supposed. While the booty taken was very large, it was not all divided between the officers and men. There was a considerable portion that was set aside as a fund to be divided some time between us when we disbanded. For not one of the officers or men expected always to continue pirates. Some day we hoped to give up this outlaw’s life and become respectable citizens, living in ease and luxury on our share of the booty. No one would be the wiser.

“I was an Englishman, and I looked forward to returning to my native village in Devonshire, marrying, and settling down. There was a farm

on which I had my eye, and an old schoolmate—a farmer's daughter—whom I thought I could induce to marry me when I returned rich."

"But where was this booty, as you call it, concealed?" I asked.

"That is what I was coming to. It was concealed on a small island east by north from the great island of Madagascar, which, as you know, lies southeast of the African continent. There is a group of islands there. None of us, that is, none of the ordinary sailors, knew the name of the island, if it had any. But I have thought it over, and consulted maps, and to the best of my reckoning it is one of the Agalegas Islands in about 57 degrees east longitude, and a little more than 10 degrees south latitude. I estimate that it may be a few hundred miles from Cape Amber, the northern extremity of Madagascar."

"Did you often go there—that is, did the ship often touch there?"

"Every few months, when we had a good supply of money and articles to leave there."

"I suppose there was quite a valuable collection of articles stored there?"

"I can't tell the value, but there were chests full of gold and silver coins, boxes of bankbills, and

merchandise of the rarest and most valuable description."

"Is it there now, or has it been divided?"

"It is there yet."

"How came you to leave the pirate ship?"

"I did not leave it till I was compelled to do so."

"How is that? Were you discharged? I should hardly think the officers would have dared to let you go, considering your knowledge as to the character of the ship."

"You are right there. They would not have dared to do so, but the Almighty, whose laws had been so flagrantly defied, interfered. There came on a terrible storm when we were cruising in the Indian Ocean. It was so violent and unexpected that we were by no means prepared to meet it.

"In the course of three hours the staunch ship Vulture became a wreck, and the crew who manned it were forced to take to the boats. There were three of these. The captain was in one, the first mate in the second, and the boatswain in the third. The sea was so rough that the first and second boats were swamped before our eyes. I was in the third. When the storm abated it was still afloat. I was one of the men on board.

"For a week we drifted about, suffering everything from hunger and thirst, for we were able to

carry but scanty stores of food and water. One by one I saw my comrades die, but having, perhaps, the best constitution, unimpaired by excesses of any kind, I survived—the last of eight men. I was very near death when I was picked up by an American ship. Of course, I did not say a word as to the character of the vessel to which I belonged, and those who rescued me were not too inquisitive, so I reached New York without divulging any secrets. But my great secret was that, as the last survivor of the piratical crew, I was the heir and sole possessor of the treasure stored on the island!”

CHAPTER III

GUY TAKES THE FIRST STEP

GUY drew a long breath when he had read thus far in the manuscript, and then plunged into it again.

When I heard this stated I could not help feeling an emotion of pity for the poor fellow who would never have the benefit of the large treasure to which he had become heir. I could not understand exactly why he had revealed all this to me, but he soon made it plain.

"I shall not live to enjoy it," he continued, "but I don't want the secret to die with me. I would like to have it benefit someone not utterly a stranger. You have been kind to me, and to you I will give all right and will to this great property."

"But how shall I find it?" I asked.

"I have prepared a document," he replied, "in which I describe the island, and the particular part

of the island where the treasure is concealed. Put your hand into the pocket of my blouse, and you will feel a folded paper. Take it, and some day I hope you will be fortunate enough to find the place where the booty is secreted."

I thanked him, though I was almost too bewildered to realize that a secret had been communicated to me that might make me fabulously rich.

That very night Antonio died. His body was sewed up in a sack, as is the custom, and thrown into the sea. Of all who witnessed it, I was the only one who had a kindly feeling of regret for the poor fellow.

Whether I shall ever be able to make any use of this information, I do not know. It would require a considerable outlay in money to fit out an expedition, and I have very little chance of inducing anyone to make this outlay. I have, however, written out an account of the sailor's revelation to me, in the hope that someone, perhaps after my death, may seek and obtain a treasure which I think must be of fabulous amount.

(Signed) GEORGE BRANDON.

Guy read this letter with breathless interest. He took in the full importance of its contents.

He realized that by the death of his uncle he

became the next heir to this far-away treasure. What should he do about it? With him there was the same embarrassment and the same difficulty that his uncle had experienced.

The treasure he fully believed in, but it was located thousands of miles away on a small island in the Indian Ocean.

It was tantalizing to reflect that it existed, and might make him rich, when it seemed wholly beyond his grasp. All the capital he could command was about twenty-five dollars in the Bayport Savings Bank.

The next question was: Should he tell his father of the discovery he had made? It might be his duty to do so. He did not know as to that.

His father had given him full permission to open and examine the chest and its contents. Possibly the papers and the secret belonged to him, but he knew very well that they would be of no earthly benefit to a quiet country minister who lived in his books and his study.

To him—Guy—on the other hand, it might prove of value. He did not know when or how, but he was young, and to the young all things are possible.

So, after thinking the matter over fully, Guy resolved to keep the matter secret.

He glanced at the second paper, and found that it was a minute description of the island, but he had not got far enough along to feel interested in this. It would keep.

Guy went downstairs slowly, plunged in thought. He hoped his father would not ask about the contents of the chest, but he need not have felt alarmed. The matter had passed entirely out of the minister's thoughts.

In order the better to think over the wonderful revelation, Guy went out for a stroll. Like many older persons, he found a walk was favorable to thought.

He walked slowly up the street to the post office. At the corner of the second street, just opposite the dry goods store, he met a boy whom he had never liked.

It was Noah Crane, the son of Deacon Crane, already referred to as desiring a younger minister.

The thought of the deacon's wish to drive his father from Bayport was not calculated to increase Guy's friendship for the son. Yet he would be courteous, being naturally a gentleman.

"Where are you going, Guy?" asked Noah.

"I am only taking a walk."

"Some other people may have to take a walk," said Noah, with a coarse laugh.

"What do you mean?" asked Guy, coloring, for he knew to what the deacon's son referred.

"Oh, I guess I'd better not tell," replied Noah, in a tantalizing tone.

"Just as you please," said Guy, coolly.

Noah was disappointed, for he wanted Guy to ask him a question which he was very ready to answer. Guy's indifference piqued him.

"You'll know soon enough," added Crane.

"In that case I will be content to wait."

"I don't know that I have any objection to tell, though. I mean your father."

"Take care how you talk about my father," said Guy, angrily. "I won't stand it."

"Oh, is your father so high and mighty that he can't be spoken about?"

"He can be spoken about—respectfully."

"I suppose you think he's a great man because he's a minister."

"I rank a minister higher than a deacon," retorted Guy, quietly.

"You do, hey? Why, my father could buy out your father two or three times over."

"That may be; but what does that prove?"

"It proves that you'd better be careful how you

talk. I heard my father say the other day that the people wanted a new minister—a young man that would make things lively. I shouldn't wonder if your father'd have to take a walk before long."

"And I am certain that you'll have to walk pretty fast if you don't want to feel the force of my fists."

Guy advanced toward Noah so menacingly that the latter took counsel of prudence and retreated hastily.

"Keep away from me, you bully!" he cried, "or I'll tell my father!"

Guy laughed, and walked away, not caring to have any difficulty with Noah. What the deacon's son had said, however, furnished him food for reflection.

Things began to look serious. There was evidently a movement on foot to get rid of his father, and this movement was headed by Deacon Crane, a man of influence in the parish and the town.

"If I could only get hold of this treasure, say within a year," thought Guy, "I would snap my fingers at the deacon. It would make me rich, and if I were rich my father would be rich, too, and independent of the parish."

The "if," however, though a very short word, was a very important one. It seemed about as

practicable to go in search of the treasure as to undertake a journey to the moon, and no more so.

When Guy went home to dinner he found Captain Grover, an old schoolmate of his father, a guest at the parsonage.

The captain and his family lived in New Bedford, and he was about to start on a voyage from there. Happening to be in Bayport on a little private business, he called on the minister. Unlike some shipmasters, he was a man of a kindly nature, and was a favorite with Guy.

"So here is Guy," he said, as the boy entered. "Bless my soul, Guy, I shouldn't have known you if I had met you out of Bayport, you have grown so. What are you going to do with him, Brother Fenwick?"

"I would like to send him to Harvard, John," replied the minister, "but there doesn't seem to be any chance of that," he added, with a sigh.

"Why not?"

"Because I am not rich enough."

"Oh, well, college is all very well, but there are other things that are good for a boy. If I had a son, I don't think I would send him to college."

"I agree with you, Captain Grover," said Guy, promptly.

"Your uncle George was a sailor?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you ever think you would like to go to sea?"

"I don't think I should like to be a sailor, but I should like to go to sea for a single voyage."

"It would do you good. You'd learn more in a year at sea than in double the time on land."

"So I think, sir. When do you start on your next voyage?"

"Next week."

"In what direction shall you go?"

"I shall go to India—probably stopping at Bombay."

"Will your course lie through the Indian Ocean?" asked Guy, eagerly.

"Yes."

"I always wished I could sail over the Indian Ocean," said Guy.

"Yes, it is an interesting voyage. Are you through school?"

"Yes; I finished last week."

"Then I'll tell you what, Guy; if your father'll let you go, I'll take you."

"Oh, father, may I go?" asked Guy, in a tone of earnest appeal.

"Go to India?" exclaimed the minister, bewildered by the suggestion.

"Yes; it would make me very happy."

In the end, Guy, seconded by the captain, carried his point, and obtained his father's consent. He had, as we know, his own reasons for wishing to make this voyage. It was something more than a boy's love of adventure.

The next week the Osprey sailed with Guy as a passenger. He quickly established himself as a favorite with the sailors. He was so bright, handsome, and intelligent, that he seemed like a gleam of sunshine, making the whole ship cheerful.

He cultivated the acquaintance of the crew, plying them with questions, and often might be seen engaged in an animated discussion with veteran sailors who were always ready to spin a yarn for him.

Captain Grover viewed all this with an indulgent smile.

"I am afraid, Guy," he said one day, with a laugh, "that you are picking up so much knowledge you will try to supersede me on the next voyage."

"It will take more than one voyage to qualify me for a captain," returned Guy. "Still, if you need help, call on me."

CHAPTER IV

IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

DAY followed day, and week succeeded week, and the good ship Osprey kept steadily on her way. Guy was not seasick, rather to his own surprise.

"You seem to be cut out for a sailor. Guy," said the captain.

"I don't know about that."

"You enjoy the sea, do you not?"

"Yes, sir; but I don't think I should care to be a sailor."

"You are picking up a good deal of seamanship. It won't be long before you know every rope in the ship."

"Knowledge doesn't come amiss, captain. I have an inquiring mind."

They rounded the Cape of Good Hope at length, and soon found themselves in the Indian Ocean. It would not be long before they would reach the neighborhood of the island which was the goal of Guy's hopes and expectations.

Till now he had not thought particularly what he would do when he got there. It would be small satisfaction to see the island, if perchance he should, and not be able to stop there. What could he do?

Alone, he was quite aware that he could do nothing. It was absolutely necessary that he should make a confidant of someone, and of someone who could be of service in helping him carry out his cherished plan.

Evidently there was no one on the Osprey who answered this description except the captain; but how would the captain look upon this plan?

Captain Grover was a pleasant man, and a good friend, but how he would regard Guy's project was something that could not be guessed.

Guy decided, however, to tell his secret and sound the captain.

Already they had passed the southern point of Madagascar, and Guy felt that there was no time to be lost.

He had free access to the captain at all times, and he took the opportunity of entering his cabin one evening when the first mate was taking his turn in commanding the vessel.

"Well, Guy, how goes it?" asked the captain, pleasantly. "I am tired. You can talk to me."

"That is just what I want to do, captain," said Guy.

"Heave ahead, then. I am listening. Perhaps you have some advice to give me as to the management of the vessel."

"I have, captain. I wish you would be guided by me."

"Well," said Captain Grover, eyeing his young companion with curiosity, "I am getting more than I bargained for. Please favor me with your suggestions, Captain Guy."

He said this with a pleasant smile, for he really liked his young passenger, apart from the friendship he felt for the father.

"I wish, captain, you could be induced to visit the Agalegas Islands in your course."

"What on earth do you know about the Agalegas Islands, Guy?"

"I know, or am very confident, that one of them was used by a band of pirates as a hiding place for treasure which they had collected from those they had robbed."

"Where did you read about this?" asked the captain, abruptly.

"Not in any book," answered Guy, "but in a letter written by my uncle George."

"Your sailor uncle?"

"Yes."

"And was this your object in coming to sea with me?"

"Yes, sir."

"Let me know what your uncle George said. I attach no importance to it, but I have a feeling of curiosity. He was never a pirate, was he?"

"I hope not."

"Then how could he know anything of pirate treasures?"

"I have his letter, captain. Would you mind hearing it?"

"No; but first, where did you get the letter?"

Guy told the story of his search in the attic, and his discovery of the letter in George Brandon's chest.

"Very well. Now for the letter. Read it to me."

In a slow, deliberate manner, in order that it might be fully understood, Guy read the letter.

The accompanying paper, however, he did not produce. He did not care to give away the whole secret unless he was assured of the captain's co-operation.

"This is a strange yarn," was Captain Grover's comment, after he had heard the letter through.

"Don't you believe it?" asked Guy, quickly.

"It sounds plausible," answered the captain, slowly, "but I have heard a great many stories about pirate treasure. Plenty of sailors are ready to manufacture them. They tell them so often that at last they come to believe them themselves."

"My uncle George would not indulge in deception."

"I presume not, but I am not so sure as to the sailor from whom he received the information."

"The sailor was on his deathbed. Would a man be likely to tell a falsehood at such a time?"

"No doubt it has been done often. However, the paper which he gave to your uncle was not written when he was on his deathbed, as I understand, but some time before, when he was perfectly well, and had no idea of death."

"That is true," Guy was obliged to admit.

"I don't see what object he could have had in deceiving my uncle, though," he added, after a pause.

"Nor I."

"Then you think there may be something in it?"

"There is such a possibility."

"Think what a great thing it would be for us to find the treasure," said Guy, his face lighting up with enthusiasm.

"It would be very agreeable, certainly; but there are some serious obstacles in the way, even if we knew the treasure to be there."

"What obstacles, captain?"

"The islands you refer to are considerably to the north of my usual course, and my duty to the owners of the vessel would not permit me to vary my route for any private enterprise of my own."

Guy's countenance fell. He saw at once that the captain was right in his statement, but it destroyed the faint hopes he had entertained that he might secure his co-operation.

"I am afraid," he said, despondently, "you don't have any confidence in the existence of the treasure."

"I don't say that, Guy. It may exist; but unless you have clear and explicit directions, we might miss it even if we should go especially in search of it."

"But I have a description of the island," urged Guy.

"Suppose you give me an idea of it."

"It is well wooded to within a mile of the shore; toward the center there is a hill, or slight eminence, perhaps a hundred and fifty feet in altitude. The extent of it is probably five miles by eight."

"That is tolerably definite."

"Don't you think it is sufficiently so to identify the island?"

"Perhaps so; but, though small, one might hunt a good while before finding the treasure after the island was discovered."

"I have some directions that would help me."

"That is well, or would be if there were any chance of your ever finding yourself on the island."

"Captain Grover, I want to ask your advice. Can you suggest any way by which I can manage to reach the island?"

"You've got me there, Guy. These islands are never visited for commercial purposes. I know almost nothing of them—indeed, nothing at all, except their location. Of course, if there were ships that visited them for any purpose, that would simplify matters; but, so far as I see, the only way of seeking the treasure would be to organize an expedition expressly for that purpose."

"I suppose that would be very expensive."

"It certainly would."

"But if the treasure were found, the one who incurred the expense would be richly repaid."

"Well, perhaps so," said the captain, skeptically.

"You won't go anywhere near the island, then, captain?"

"No, Guy, I sha'n't."

Guy sat quiet a moment. He was very much disappointed. He began to realize how utterly quixotic was the expedition on which he had embarked.

"I begin to wish I had never found the letter," he said.

"As to that, Guy, no harm is done. I presume, if you hadn't found the letter, I should not have had the pleasure of your company on this voyage."

"No, I suppose not."

"Probably you will derive some pleasure and benefit from the trip, even if you never touch a dollar of this treasure."

"That is true, captain; but I have a special reason for wishing I might obtain money from this source, or some other."

"What is it?"

Then Guy told what he had learned as to Deacon Crane's intention of driving his father from the parish. It would be a heavy blow to the minister, who was no longer endowed with a young man's energy or hopefulness.

"You are a good boy, Guy, to have so much consideration for your father; but I am afraid you

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are leaning on a broken reed if you have any idea of helping him by the discovery of this treasure. However, I will turn the idea over in my mind, and if I can think of any suggestion to offer you I will do so."

CHAPTER V

AN ADVENTURE IN BOMBAY

GUY's conversation with Captain Grover left him with a feeling of disappointment. He felt that the captain had little faith in the reality of the treasure, and considered his enterprise a failure in advance.

Guy had overlooked the principal difficulties in the way. He had managed to reach the Indian Ocean, but this had brought him no nearer the realization of his hopes. If he had had nothing on his mind he might have enjoyed the bright, calm days and the clear skies, with glimpses here and there of islands covered with tropical vegetation.

But he had started on his voyage with a purpose. He wanted to find and secure the treasure hinted at in his uncle's letter, and make his father independent for life. Of this there seemed to be now no chance, or next to none.

There was nothing for him to do except to remain on board the *Osprey* till the vessel reached

Bombay. Then there would be the return voyage, at the end of which he would have seen considerable of the world, but would have gained nothing to repay him for the year he had spent away from home.

But there was no help for it. The captain would not change his course, and Guy must be content to leave the island unvisited, and the great problem unsolved.

At last they reached Bombay.

Guy surveyed the place with curious interest. He was not prepared to find it so large.

A city which contains seven hundred thousand inhabitants is a great city in any part of the world.

Not having any duties on board the ship, Guy was allowed to go and come when he pleased.

He found that among the foreign residents the English were the most prominent and influential. His walks were chiefly in what is called the European town, but he frequently strolled through the more picturesque part occupied by the natives.

One evening he was sauntering through the Persian quarter when he was startled by seeing a brown-faced native, his head surmounted by a turban, dart from an alleyway and pursue a well-dressed man, apparently either English or American.

That his object was murder or robbery, perhaps both, seemed evident, for he held in his hand a long, narrow, dangerous-looking knife.

Guy was not only courageous, but prompt. He carried a stout cane, not that he needed its support, but because he had been recommended to have it with him for defense, if needed.

He did not pause a moment, but springing forward, brought it down with emphasis on the arm of the Persian.

The native gave a sharp, shrill cry, which attracted the attention of the man whom he had intended to attack.

He was clearly an Englishman, inclined to be stout, and apparently about forty-five years of age.

He looked quickly from the native to Guy, and back again.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"Only that this man was about to attack you with his knife."

"And you saved me?"

"Yes; I was, fortunately, in time to prevent his striking you."

"I don't know how to thank you, but I must deal with this scoundrel, first."

He seized the Oriental by the throat, and forced him to his knees.

"Dog!" he said, "what have you to say before I kill you?"

The cowardly fellow uttered voluble and abject entreaties for pardon in bad English. The purport of his speech was that he was a poor man, and had no money.

"Forgive me, Mr. Saunders," he said.

"Ha! You know my name!" said the Englishman.

He bent over and scanned the face of his would-be assailant closely.

"I know him," he said, briefly. "He was a native servant in my employ. I had to discharge him because I found him dishonest and a liar. Probably his attack to-night was prompted by a spirit of revenge."

"Don't kill me!" pleaded the Persian, in terrified accents.

"So you would have killed me, you scoundrel!" retorted the Englishman, shaking him vigorously.

"I—pardon me—I didn't know it was you, worshipful sir!"

"You knew it well enough, I'll be bound!"

"If you will go with me," went on the Englishman, turning to Guy, "I will conduct this fellow

to the police office. I do not propose to let him off. He is evidently a dangerous man, and, coward as he is, he may do harm unless he is secured."

Guy readily accompanied his new acquaintance, and saw Isef, as he was called, placed in the hands of the police officials. He agreed, also, to appear the next day and give the testimony of an eye-witness as to the man's felonious attempt to assault Mr. Saunders.

"And now," said the Englishman, after this matter was disposed of, "let me know the name of the boy who has done me such an important service."

"My name is Guy Fenwick."

"Are you English?"

"No, sir; I am an American boy."

"I thought so. Though there are resemblances, there is a dash about you Americans that I don't find in my own countrymen. But how does it happen that you are so far from home?"

"I came to Bombay as a passenger on the American ship Osprey, Captain Grover."

"A passenger? Then you are not connected with the ship?"

"No, sir."

"Did you come here on a business errand?"

"Partly, sir; but it is business of a strange na-

ture. If you will let me call upon you to-morrow, I shall be glad to tell you what it is."

"I shall certainly wish to know, and if it is anything in which I can help you, I will try to do so."

"You don't know how much you are promising, Mr. Saunders," said Guy, smiling.

"No, I don't know that; but I do know that you have saved my life this evening," returned the Englishman, earnestly.

Guy did not gainsay him, for he knew that it was true. Had the Persian driven his knife into the back of the English merchant the blow would have been instantly fatal.

"Perhaps I had better leave you now, sir," said Guy. "The captain expects me to report at the ship before ten o'clock."

"Very well; but I shall expect to see you to-morrow at my office."

"Where is it, sir?"

In reply, Mr. Saunders handed Guy his card.

The office was on the principal business street in the European town. Guy was already sufficiently acquainted with Bombay to know exactly where it was located.

"I will come, sir," he said.

When Guy returned to the ship the captain said: "You are late to-night, Guy."

"Yes, sir; I was detained by important business."

"So you have business here already?" returned Captain Grover, smiling.

"Yes, sir. Shall I tell you about it?"

"If it won't take too long."

"I was fortunate enough to save the life of an English merchant."

Guy here gave particulars.

"John Saunders!" repeated the captain, in surprise. "Why, he is one of the wealthiest and most prominent men in the English colony."

"Whatever he is, he was very near death to-night."

"Did he ask you to call upon him?"

"Yes. I am to call to-morrow."

"By all means keep the appointment," said the captain, in a significant tone.

"I certainly shall. Mr. Saunders seems to be very friendly to me, and I am glad to have made his acquaintance. Do you know, Captain Grover, he is the first Englishman I ever met; that is, to become acquainted with."

At eleven o'clock the next day Guy presented himself at the office of his English friend.

He sent in his card by a young Persian who seemed to be in the merchant's employ. He was received at once.

"I am glad to see you, my young friend," said the merchant, cordially. "I didn't fully realize till after you left me what a narrow escape I had. It is God's mercy that I am alive to-day."

"The danger came so suddenly, and was so soon over, that I have not realized it yet."

"I realize it, and shall always remember it. But you came here to explain the business that brought you to Bombay."

"I had no thought of Bombay, Mr. Saunders. It was an island in the Indian Ocean that I wished to visit."

"Indeed! Have you visited it?"

"No, sir; and I fear that I shall never have an opportunity to do so."

"I am in the dark. I do not understand you."

"Then, sir, I will try to explain, but I am not sure what you will think of my enterprise."

"Go on."

The merchant settled himself in a posture of attention, and Guy began his narrative.

He was listened to without interruption. Guy could not gather from the merchant's expression what impression the story was making upon him.

When he finished, Mr. Saunders said:

"Your tale is certainly a strange one, and your business of a remarkable character for a boy of your age."

Here he paused.

"I am not prepared to express any opinion yet," he added. "I must take a little time to think it over. Meanwhile I will detain you through the day. I shall be glad if you will take dinner with me."

"I shall be happy to do so."

"Then if you will occupy yourself with the papers and magazines you will find on yonder table, I will write some letters which must go by the next steamer, and will then be at your disposal."

CHAPTER VI

GUY'S PROGRESS

"How long will the Osprey remain in port?" asked the merchant, when they sat at dinner.

"Four weeks, sir."

"Your sole object in taking passage and coming to this part of the world was to look after the concealed treasure, I take it?"

"Yes, sir. At any rate, but for that I should hardly have come."

"Of course, you knew that the chances of your ever being able to visit the island were small?"

"Yes, sir; I knew that, but I trusted to luck; and I knew that at any rate I should enjoy the voyage."

"In what way do you propose to make your living—by a profession, or by a business career?"

"I expect to become a business man."

"Have you a fair education?"

"Yes, sir; I am prepared to enter Harvard College. I completed my course of preparation last summer."

"That is well. Now I am going to make you a proposal."

He paused, and Guy listened eagerly for what was coming.

"It is this," said the merchant. "I suppose you have nothing to do on the ship."

"No, sir."

"I will invite you to work for four weeks in my counting-room. It will be the commencement of your business education. Besides, you will do me a favor, as a young clerk is absent from duty, sick with a fever. What do you say?"

"I will accept gladly, sir."

"The hours are not wearing. In this warm climate we cannot venture to work as steadily as in England or America."

"Will it be necessary for me to board in the city?"

"No; it will be better, on the whole, to sleep aboard the vessel, as you might contract a fever on shore, not being acclimated."

"Very well, sir. When do you wish me to begin?"

"To-morrow morning."

"All right, sir."

"As to your compensation, I will give you twenty-five dollars per week."

"But," said Guy, astonished, "that is a large salary for a novice like me."

"You won't be a novice very long, and I paid that salary to my clerk who is sick."

"You are very liberal, sir."

"I have good reason to be."

When Guy reported his engagement to Captain Grover, that officer congratulated him.

"It is a great thing," he said, "to have won the favor of a rich merchant like Mr. Saunders. Besides, the knowledge you will obtain of business will be of infinite value to you."

So Guy went to work the next day.

Of course, everything was new at first, but he had a thorough training as a student, and he set to work to learn business in the same way he had learned Greek, Latin, and mathematics at school. The result was that he made such progress as to surprise Mr. Saunders.

"You have already become of value to me," the merchant said one day.

"Didn't you think I would, sir?"

"I thought it would take longer to break you in. You have the making of a very successful business man in you."

Guy was gratified by this tribute.

"I am pleased to have you say so," he replied.
"I have a special object in wishing to succeed."

"What is that?"

"My father is a minister, dependent upon a small salary for support. He is now fifty, and there is a movement to oust him from the place. Should that succeed, I want to be able to free him from pecuniary anxiety."

"That is highly commendable in you."

A part of the time Guy was employed upon the books of the firm. One day he pointed out an incorrect entry which would have entailed a considerable loss.

"You are sharp," said the merchant. "Do you know that you have saved me five hundred pounds? Besides, you have opened my eyes. I have reason to think that my former bookkeeper—the one whose place you have taken—was in league with the customer in whose account you have found an error. Our transactions are so large that I should have suspected nothing. Now I shall make an investigation."

"My predecessor may have been simply careless," suggested Guy.

"True; but I can't afford to employ men who are careless."

"You won't deprive him of his situation, sir?"

"Not at once, but I shall watch him. For some reason I should like to have you in his place."

"I should like to be in your employ, but I should not care to be so far away from my father for any length of time."

"There is another consideration, also. This climate would be dangerous to one unaccustomed to it. No; I have other views for you."

"I wonder what they are," thought Guy.

The four weeks rolled quickly away. They might have seemed long to Guy if he had been unemployed, but his duties in the office so occupied his time that the period seemed very short indeed.

One day Captain Grover surprised him by saying: "Well, Guy, the Osprey will start for home next Monday."

Guy heard the announcement with regret. He had become so interested in his work that he did not like to leave it.

"I suppose you will be ready?"

"Yes, sir."

Guy notified Mr. Saunders that he should have to leave him.

The merchant looked thoughtful.

"I am sorry for that," he said. "Your predecessor—the man whose place you are taking—is not yet well."

"I am sorry if I inconvenience you, Mr. Saunders."

"You are specially anxious to return on the Osprey?"

"If I don't, I know of no other way of getting home."

"You can get home quicker by way of London and Liverpool."

"But that would cost considerable money."

"That is true. Of course, if I detain you here I shall undertake to send you home free of expense to yourself. Perhaps, however, that may not be a matter of so much importance to you."

Guy looked puzzled.

"You would travel by steamer to Liverpool, and from there to New York or Boston, also by steamer."

"It would enable me to see more of the world, but it would cost you a good deal of money."

"Yes; but I have not yet told you that I may have some business for you to attend to for me in England."

"That would alter the case, sir. If you have confidence enough in me to employ me in that way, I shall be very glad to do what I can for you."

"Then there is another matter. I have not yet spoken to you about the pirates' treasure."

"No, sir."

"I have thought over the story you told me, and I will tell you the decision to which I have come. I think there is a faint chance of the story being true."

Guy brightened up at this admission, for he had great faith in Mr. Saunders' judgment.

"Of course, it will cost money to obtain it, even if it exists, for I see no other way than to fit out a special expedition."

"Yes, sir," returned Guy, soberly, for he believed this would destroy all chance of his ever obtaining the treasure.

"As to the prospect of influencing anyone with capital to go on such a quest, I am afraid it is not bright."

"I suppose I may as well give it up, then?"

"Not necessarily. The time may come when I can myself undertake it. Meanwhile, as it may be a good while, you will be left in suspense and poverty."

"Still, if I thought the time would ever come when you would be willing to take hold of it, I would be content to wait."

"Then suppose you have a copy made of your uncle's letter, and also of the one in which directions are given as to the island and the place of

concealment. The original papers you can keep, and leave the copies with me."

"I will do so, sir."

"You repose a good deal of confidence in me. Suppose I fit out the expedition, secure the treasure, and cheat you out of your share of it?"

"I have no fear," replied Guy. "I have perfect confidence in you."

"You shall not regret that confidence. I will see that you derive some immediate benefit from this treasure to which you have fallen heir. I propose that, as the expense of fitting out the expedition will be mine, I shall have a right to claim one-half the treasure."

"I agree to that, sir."

"And I furthermore agree to pay over to you *at once* one thousand pounds, to be repaid to me out of your share of the treasure when it is found."

"But it may never be found!"

"That will be my lookout."

"And I shall be worth a thousand pounds—five thousand dollars!" said Guy.

"Exactly so."

"I can hardly believe it."

"You will believe it when the money is in your hands, as it will be to-morrow."

"It was a very fortunate day when I met you, Mr. Saunders," said Guy, gratefully.

"And a providential day when I met you, Guy. Don't forget that you saved my life. But I have not yet spoken of the business which you are to do for me in England."

When Guy heard this he was even more surprised.

CHAPTER VII

GUY RECEIVES A COMMISSION

"NOT going back on the Osprey?" exclaimed Captain Grover, in great surprise.

"No, sir. Mr. Saunders wishes to retain me in his employment."

"But are you aware that the climate of Bombay is very trying to a foreigner?"

"I do not expect to stay in Bombay."

"I thought you were intending to remain with your present employer?"

"I expect to remain in his employ, but he will very soon send me to England on business."

Captain Grover looked still more amazed.

"Does he know how old you are?" he asked, abruptly.

"He knows how *young* I am," answered Guy, with a smile. "Still, he seems to have confidence in me."

"I suppose I shall have to give my consent, Guy. I hold myself in a manner responsible for you, as

you left home under my charge. Still, I can see that Mr. Saunders is likely to prove a good friend to you. How much does he pay you?"

"Thus far he has paid me twenty-five dollars a week."

"You can hardly expect that he will pay you such large wages when you are traveling."

"On the contrary, he says he will pay me more."

"Either you are a very smart boy, or he overrates you greatly."

"Suppose we say the first?" said Guy, smiling.

"Well, perhaps so. How long are you to stay in England?"

"I don't know yet."

"From there where will you go?"

"To Boston or New York."

Captain Grover looked relieved.

"I want to be able to tell your father that you are all right. He will naturally feel anxious when he thinks that you are alone in a distant country."

"I don't know about that. He always had considerable confidence in my ability to get along."

"He didn't know anything about your crazy idea of hunting for a pirate's treasure, did he?"

"I never mentioned the matter to him, and I hope you will not. He gave me permission to

search Uncle George's sea chest, but I never told him what I found in it. You know, captain, he is a very absent-minded man. I presume he has never thought of the matter from that day to this."

"I am glad you have given up the notion of hunting for a treasure which very likely does not exist."

"Have I?" said Guy to himself; but he only smiled.

He had never said anything to Captain Grover about Mr. Saunders' plans, or about the thousand pounds which the merchant had paid over to him. He knew that the captain would rejoice in his good fortune, but he wanted to bide his time and surprise his friends at home with the story of his luck.

He felt that already he was worth enough money to help his father materially in case Deacon Crane should succeed in his efforts to have him ousted from his parish in favor of a younger man.

On the day that the Osprey was to weigh anchor Guy remained on board, with Mr. Saunders' permission, till the good ship had fairly left her dock.

As he watched her gradually fading out of sight, and realized that he was perhaps eight thousand miles from home, with none of his old friends near him, he felt homesick for a short time, but soon the thought of his wonderful good fortune cheered

him up, and he went back to the office full of exhilaration and hope.

In about a week the sick clerk, whose place Guy had taken, returned, and a few days later Guy embarked on an English steamer, bound for Liverpool.

On the departure of the Osprey he had taken up his residence at the house of Mr. Saunders, who was a widower. A maiden sister kept house for him.

"I want you with me," said the merchant, "partly because it will be more homelike for you than a hotel, and partly because I shall have a better chance to instruct you in the business which you are to transact for me in London."

Guy learned that Mr. Saunders was special partner in the London firm of Russell & Co., and had constant transactions with them.

A part of Guy's instructions related to business to be done with them. He had thought that this would be all, but he was mistaken.

One evening, after supper, Mr. Saunders said: "I have given you directions as to business matters, but I have another affair, requiring discretion and good judgment on your part, in which I shall require your help."

"I shall do my best, sir."

"I am sure of that. You must know that three years since I was informed of the death of an old schoolmate, Herbert Bell. We had been very intimate in school, and retained an interest in each other, though our paths in life differed materially."

"He became a clergyman, while I entered upon a business career. His wife died before him. At his own death he left a son, about your age, I should judge, and he left him to me, beseeching me, in remembrance of our old intimacy, to look after him. This I willingly agreed to do.

"Poor Herbert left only a few hundred pounds, the income of which was quite insufficient to support and educate his son Vivian. On the whole, I was not sorry for this, as it enabled me to be of even more service to my friend's boy.

"I would have been glad to send for him and bring him up under my own eye, but I didn't dare to expose his health to this dangerous climate. I therefore placed him at school about fifty miles from London.

"I had been so long absent from England that I knew nothing of the schools there, but trusted to my business correspondent to find one that was satisfactory.

"He was placed at an academy kept by Dr. Peter

Musgrave, whom I supposed a fitting guardian for the orphan boy.

"You see, I trusted to the judgment of my business associate. I have had little or no direct communication with or about Vivian, but, immersed in business, took it for granted that all things were going on as they should.

"My first doubt came when, about a month since, I received a letter from the boy, which I will show you."

He took from his desk a letter, written in a schoolboy hand, which he gave to Guy to read. It ran as follows:

MY DEAR GUARDIAN:

I have been wanting for a good while to write to you about the way I am treated by Dr. Musgrave. He seems to have taken a great dislike to me, and uses me cruelly. I am sure it is not because of my conduct, because I try to obey the rules of the school. But I once complained of his son, Simon, who was in the habit of ordering me about, and who regularly made me give him half of my pocket money. Simon denied that this was so, and his father chose to believe him. The result was that I was flogged, and from that time I have been ill treated. Scarcely a day passes without my re-

ceiving punishment. I can never be happy here, and I do hope, my dear guardian, that you will remove me to another school.

If Dr. Musgrave knew that I was writing to you he would not permit me to send the letter. I do not dare to post it myself, but have got a schoolmate to drop it in the post office for me.

This was the material portion of the letter.

As Guy read it, he felt a strong sympathy for the writer, and his indignation was excited against the tyrannical schoolmaster.

His lips closed firmly, and there was an angry light in his eyes.

"Dr. Musgrave wouldn't have treated me in that way," he said.

"No, I think not. You have evidently plenty of pluck. But Vivian probably takes after his father, who was of a gentle and retiring disposition. He never asserted himself, and always seemed to me to be lacking in proper spirit.

"Since I received this letter I have felt uneasy, and wished that I were in England to investigate Vivian's complaints, and, if necessary, remove him from the school."

"I wish you had done so at once, Mr. Saunders."

"I had no one whom I could call upon to act for me. This letter came since I made your acquaintance, and it was this partly that led me to think of sending you to England. You will go as my representative, with full power to act in my place, as your judgment may dictate.

"I have an idea that the boy is delicate, and wish you to consult a physician. If the doctor recommends a few months spent in travel, I may allow you to take him with you to America."

"I should be a young guardian, Mr. Saunders. I think you said he was about my age."

"Probably he is a year younger. At any rate, in all essential points you are several years older. I have not known you long, but I have confidence in your judgment. As to the expenses, I shall authorize you to draw upon my London correspondent for whatever money you may need."

"I will gladly undertake the commission, Mr. Saunders. I think I can promise that your ward will have no complaints to make of me. Shall you have any business for me to attend to in New York?"

"In all probability I shall have. My New York correspondent is Gilbert Frazer, whose office is opposite Bowling Green. Have you ever been in New York?"

"No, sir; but I have no doubt I shall be able to attend to whatever business there you may place in my hands."

"I have no doubt of it. Where is your home?"

"In Bayport. That is a village in Massachusetts, not far from New Bedford."

Mr. Saunders made a note of this.

"I will give you further instructions, should any occur to me," he said. "Now we had best retire."

CHAPTER VIII

FROM BOMBAY TO LIVERPOOL

ON the steamer which left Bombay with Guy as a passenger he occupied one of the best staterooms, which had been selected by Mr. Saunders himself.

The voyage was a long one, and Guy had abundant opportunity to become acquainted with his fellow passengers.

Among them was a young Englishman, perhaps twenty-five years of age, named August Locke. The rest were old or middle-aged men, and it was natural that Locke and Guy should become more closely acquainted than the others.

On the first day, August Locke made overtures to Guy.

"I am glad," he said, "that there is one young person on board besides myself. Suppose we become friends?"

"I shall be glad to know you better," replied Guy. "I was beginning to feel lonesome."

"You are English, like myself?"

"No; I am an American."

"And traveling alone? Why, you can't be much over sixteen!"

"That is my age."

"It seems strange to me that a boy of your age should be traveling alone so far from home."

"I sometimes wonder at it myself."

"It can't be for health, for you are fresh and blooming."

"No. Suppose I say that it is on business?"

"Then all I can say is that you Americans begin life much earlier than we English. Why, at your age I was attending school in England."

"What school did you attend?"

"The school of Dr. Peter Musgrave, not far from London."

"I am very glad to hear it."

"Why?" asked Locke, with a puzzled look.

"Because there is a boy at that school in whom I am interested."

"An American boy?"

"No; a ward of my employer. He has received complaints that the boy is ill treated, and has sent me to inquire into the matter. If you can tell me something of the school I shall be very much obliged."

"I can't say much good of it. Dr. Musgrave is

an ill-tempered man, of small acquirements, whose delight it is to tyrannize over the boys under his charge. I have received more than one flogging from him, wantonly inflicted, without my deserving it."

"You would not send any boy there in whom you were interested?"

"Most certainly not!"

"Then I shall probably withdraw Vivian from the school."

"You speak as if you were his guardian, and had full powers."

"So I have; and I suppose I may call myself his guardian, since the responsibility has been given me by Mr. Saunders."

"Are you speaking of the great Bombay merchant?"

"Yes."

"He seems to repose a great deal of confidence in you."

"He does," answered Guy.

"This seems strange, since you are an American."

"Yet you are disposed to be my friend," said Guy, smiling, "in spite of this drawback."

"True."

"I will show you a letter written by the boy to

Mr. Saunders, and you can give me your opinion of it."

August Locke cast his eyes over the letter of Vivian Bell already quoted in a previous chapter.

"Poor chap!" said the young Englishman. "He does seem to be having a hard time of it."

"Can you tell me anything about Simon Musgrave, the doctor's son?"

"Not much. When I was at school he was a small boy in knickerbockers. He was old enough, however, to show that he was a chip of the old block, and inherited his father's unpleasant traits. That he would bully a boy whom he disliked I can readily believe. I remember once giving him a thrashing for impertinence. I got flogged for it by the doctor, but I had the consolation of knowing that I had hurt Simon quite as much as his father hurt me."

"I don't think he would bully me."

"You don't look like a boy that would allow himself to be bullied. I suppose this Vivian Bell is a different sort of boy."

"Yes; Mr. Saunders tells me that his father had a gentle disposition, and thinks the son may resemble him in that respect. His father was a clergyman."

"That explains it."

"I don't think so. I, too, am the son of a clergyman; but I hope I have some spirit."

"I am very sure you have. Anyone could tell that from your manner and bearing."

"Did you continue at the school till your education was finished?"

"No. My father withdrew me, partly because the doctor got 'down on me,' as the saying is, and partly because he was led to think the pupils didn't learn much."

"I suppose you don't revere the memory of your old teacher?"

"I have often wished that I could get hold of him and repay with interest some of the floggings which I received from him as a boy."

Guy was glad to have obtained, before arriving in England, some information in regard to the school which Vivian Bell was attending. Now that he knew for certain that the complaints the boy made were justified, he was in a hurry to release him from the tyrannical rule under which he was suffering.

"When I go out to Dr. Musgrave's school, Mr. Locke," he said, "I wish you would come with me."

"Perhaps I may; I should like to see the old place. My memories of it are not all disagreeable.

Some of the boys were friends of mine, and I remember them with attachment. I am one who does not forget old friends."

"I am sure not."

"Then I should like to see the doctor again. When we parted I was a boy of fifteen, and I stood in fear of his superior strength. Now——" and he smiled as he rose to his full height and stretched out his muscular arms.

"Now, you would be more than a match for him," suggested Guy.

"I think there is no doubt of that. I have been growing stronger, until I am much more powerful than he was at his best, while the years that have elapsed—ten—have probably diminished his vigor."

During the voyage Guy and August Locke had many pleasant conversations. Guy learned that he was the nephew of a Glasgow merchant, and that his visit to Bombay had been on business.

"You are Scotch?" said Guy.

"My mother was English, so that I am only half Scotch."

Among the passengers on board was another American, but he was a man of sixty. He seemed a cynical man, who, strangely enough, appeared to conceive a dislike for his young countryman.

Indeed, he had no sympathy with young people, whom he thought to be utterly destitute of judgment. His curiosity was excited by finding a boy of Guy's age traveling alone, and he plied him with questions till he found out that he was in the employ of John Saunders of Bombay.

"Couldn't Mr. Saunders find an older representative than you?" he asked, in an unpleasant tone.

"I have no doubt he might, sir."

"Then he was a fool to confide his business to a mere boy."

Guy was not offended, but he was amused.

"Do you know Mr. Saunders, sir?" he asked.

"I have met him—in a business way."

"Did he impress you as a fool?" asked Guy, demurely.

Solon Johnson eyed the boy sharply. He was not quite sure whether he was being made fun of or not.

"I can't call him that," he answered, "for he has been successful in business and made a large fortune."

"Yet he has appointed me his agent."

"Yes, he has shown his folly there."

"I suppose if you had known him well enough you would have dissuaded him from doing it?"

"I certainly should. I don't mean any reflection

upon you, young man, but it stands to reason that a boy of your age is unfit for any large responsibility."

"Perhaps you are right," said Guy, a little nettled, "but I shall endeavor to show that he made no mistake."

"I can't understand at all how such a man should have made such a blunder. Were you ever in business before you left America?"

"No, sir."

"What could possibly have recommended you to Mr. Saunders?"

Guy could easily have satisfied his curiosity, but he did not propose to do so.

"We became acquainted, sir, and he employed me in his office in Bombay. So he had some opportunity of becoming familiar with my capacity for business."

"What did he pay you?"

Guy felt that this was going too far. He did not care to gratify Mr. Johnson's impertinent curiosity.

"You must excuse my answering that question, Mr. Johnson," he said.

"Oh, well, just as you please. If you were in my office in Boston I should not think of offering you more than five dollars a week."

"Then, sir, I think I shall hardly be likely to apply to you for employment."

"I don't think much of your countryman, Guy," said August Locke, when they were alone.

"Nor do I, Mr. Locke. I wonder which is right in his estimate of me—Mr. Saunders or he."

"Mr. Saunders, I am sure."

"Thank you for your good opinion."

At length the long voyage was over, and with a thrill of interest and excitement Guy stepped on the wharf at Liverpool.

CHAPTER IX

GUY ARRIVES IN LONDON

IN company with his new acquaintance, August Locke, Guy pushed on to London. He knew nothing about hotels, but by the advice of Locke he secured a room at the Charing Cross.

The next morning he called at the offices of Mr. Saunders' correspondent, Mr. Russell.

These offices were in a solid and heavy-looking building, quite different from the business structures to be found in American cities.

Guy entered, and was asked his business by the clerk, who looked as if he might have come from Glasgow or some other Scotch city.

"I wish to see Mr. Russell," answered Guy.

"You can give me your message."

"I might, but I don't think I shall. I wish to see Mr. Russell personally."

"Mr. Russell does not see boys," said the clerk, in an important tone. "What firm are you with?"

"Mr. John Saunders of Bombay."

The clerk opened wide his eyes in astonishment.

"As I have come some thousands of miles to see Mr. Russell, I hope he will grant me an interview," Guy added.

"Do you come from Bombay?" asked the clerk, in an altered tone.

"Yes."

"Who came with you?"

"Quite a number of passengers," answered Guy, coolly, "but I don't see what concern that is of yours."

"You are a hextraordinary boy," said the Scotch clerk, who had been long enough in London to acquire the Cockney accent.

"Thank you for the compliment, but I should like to see Mr. Russell."

The clerk withdrew to an inner room, and presently reappeared.

"You can go in," he said.

Guy nodded, and betook himself to Mr. Russell's private room.

He found himself in the presence of a grave-looking man of fifty, who looked staid and dignified.

He surveyed Guy with evident curiosity.

"My clerk tells me you came from Bombay, from my correspondent, Mr. Saunders."

"I am glad he told you so much. He tried to prevent my seeing you."

"I do not often transact business with boys of your age. That was doubtless his reason."

"Whatever his reason may have been, he made a mistake."

"I suppose you have credentials?"

"Here is Mr. Saunders' letter."

The dignified Mr. Russell took the proffered letter, and as he read it looked from time to time at Guy in evident surprise.

This was the letter:

MY DEAR SIR:

This letter will be presented you by young Mr. Fenwick, who has been in my employ here, and who has my entire confidence. I have given him two or three business commissions, of which he will speak to you. I have also instructed him to visit the school at which you placed my young ward, Vivian Bell, and investigate some complaints which the boy has made in a letter to me. Should he find them to be well founded he will, at his discretion, either remove him to another school, or, should his health require it, take him on a journey.

Whatever funds he may require you will sup-

ply him with, to an extent not exceeding five hundred pounds, and aid him in any way he may suggest. Though he is young, I have implicit confidence in his good judgment.

Yours respectfully,

JOHN SAUNDERS.

It was evident that the grave Mr. Russell was very much amazed.

Guy seemed so young, and the responsible position in which he had been placed seemed so unsuitable to his youth, that the London merchant could hardly believe that the letter was genuine.

"Mr. Saunders writes that you were in his office in Bombay."

"Yes, sir."

"How long were you there?"

"About six weeks."

"Did he know you before he engaged you to enter his service?"

"Only a day or two."

"All this is very extraordinary. Were you born in England or in Bombay?"

"In neither, sir. I am an American."

"I cannot understand how Mr. Saunders should have engaged you on such short acquaintance, as you are so young."

"I don't like to mention it, sir, but I had the good fortune to save his life, and——"

"How?"

Guy related the particulars of the night attack on Mr. Saunders.

"I understand," said the Englishman, his face clearing up. "You certainly placed my friend under great obligation; but how came he to have so much confidence in your business ability?"

"He knew nothing of my business ability at first, but after employing me a few weeks he seemed to be satisfied with me."

"Quite so. I was at first inclined to fear that my old friend had lost his usual discretion, but I begin to see that he has acted sensibly. I shall, of course, comply with his request, and will assist you to the best of my endeavors. First, do you require any money?"

"Not to-day, sir, but I probably shall soon."

Guy gave some business messages to Mr. Russell, and then asked: "Have you heard anything of Mr. Saunders' young ward, of late, Mr. Russell?"

"Yesterday I received a letter from Dr. Musgrave, complaining of his insubordination."

"Will you kindly show me the letter?"

The merchant opened his desk and produced a

letter, which he placed in the hands of his young companion.

Guy read it with mingled interest and curiosity.

This is the material portion of it:

RESPECTED SIR:

I regret to find myself under the necessity of complaining to you of the boy whom you some time since placed under my charge. I should have refrained from doing so, feeling quite able to manage him, if I did not suspect that he had made complaints to you or Mr. Saunders, of Bombay, of his treatment at the school. Let me say, then, that he has shown himself very insubordinate, and in that respect has set a bad example to my other pupils. In particular he is impudent to my son Simon, and seems to have conceived a violent hatred for him.

Simon is a very trustworthy and reliable boy, who endeavors in every way to carry out my wishes. I have made him a monitor, and to a certain extent have placed the younger boys under his charge. He has exercised great forbearance with Vivian, only requiring him to treat him, as my representative, with proper respect. This, young Bell seems unwilling to do, and I have no doubt is quite capable of misrepresenting the condition of things at the school, and his own treatment.

I do not ask your assistance in any way, feeling quite able to cope with him, but I wish to prepare you for any mendacious statements the boy may be tempted to make.

My school has, happily, a high reputation, and has been for years noted for its excellent parental discipline. I have received many testimonials from parents who appreciate the valuable training their sons have received at the school.

I am, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
PETER MUSGRAVE, LL.D.

"What do you think of this letter, Mr. Russell?" asked Guy.

"I have nothing to go upon. I have not received any letter of complaint from young Bell."

"Mr. Saunders has."

"Indeed!"

"I have brought a copy of it to show you."

The merchant looked over the letter, which has already been given in an earlier chapter.

"If these statements are true," he said slowly, "the boy should be removed at once. The question is, are they true or not?"

"What did you know of the school, sir, that led you to select it for Vivian Bell?"

"I saw it advertised in the *Times*. Several well-known names were appended as references."

"I chanced to have a fellow passenger, a young man, who, in his boyhood, was a pupil at the school."

"Ha! And what did he say?"

"That Dr. Musgrave was a brute and a tyrant."

"Possibly he was insubordinate, also."

"I shall bring him in some day to call upon you. His name is August Locke, of Glasgow."

"Indeed! Is he related to the merchant of that name?" asked Mr. Russell, with interest.

"He is his son."

"His testimony carries weight. Then he thinks the complaints are well founded?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, Mr. Fenwick, the affair is in your hands. I have no responsibility in the matter. You will doubtless go to Milton and investigate."

"Yes, sir. I am glad to say that Mr. Locke has agreed to go with me."

"He can assist you materially, as he is acquainted with the school."

At this moment the young Scotch clerk made his appearance.

"Here is a message just received from Milton," he said.

The merchant tore it open, and read aloud, in some excitement:

FROM DR. MUSGRAVE, OF MILTON, TO DAVID
RUSSELL, GRACE COURT, LONDON.

The boy Vivian Bell has run away. Will you defray expenses of search?

"How shall I answer this, Mr. Fenwick?"

"Please wire him that a special messenger will call upon him to-morrow."

CHAPTER X

AT MILTON SCHOOL

MILTON SCHOOL was situated in a delightful part of the country. It was broad on the ground, and built of stone, the sides being overgrown with the clinging ivy so abundant in England.

It ought to have been a paradise. Casual visitors always admired it, and declared that the boys who attended it were especially favored.

But they did not know the character of Dr. Peter Musgrave, who had for fifteen years exercised tyrannical sway over the pupils committed to his charge.

He was in the habit of forming sudden prejudices against his pupils, and when he was "down on a boy," as the saying is, no amount of good behavior softened him. Vivian Bell had been unfortunate enough to incur this man's enmity, and his life had been a hard one ever since he had entered the school.

Two days before the date of the telegram men-

tioned at the close of the last chapter, Simon Musgrave, the doctor's son, ordered Vivian to go on an errand to Milton village.

"I have a bad headache, Simon," said Vivian. "I don't feel as if I could sit up."

"I don't believe a word of it," returned the young tyrant. "You're lazy, that's all."

"But indeed my head aches badly, Simon."

"Don't call me Simon."

"Isn't that your name?" asked Vivian, wonderingly.

"My name *to you* is Mr. Musgrave. Just remember that, will you?"

"Yes, Simon—I mean Mr. Musgrave."

"Take that!" said Simon, aiming a blow at Vivian that nearly felled him to the ground. "Perhaps you'll remember next time."

"You have no right to strike me!" said Vivian, plucking up courage.

He did not dare to retaliate, for he was weak compared with the young tyrant.

"Haven't I? Then I'll do it again!"

Which threat he promptly translated into action.

"Now you know me. Don't you ever dare to tell me again that I haven't a right to wallop you! Start for the village at once, or you'll get another!"

But there was an unexpected champion in the person of one of the older boys, who had come up while Simon was gratifying his brutal instincts.

"I say, Musgrave, what are you doing to Bell?"

"None of your business!"

"Isn't it, though? You have made him cry."

"Oh, he's a cry-baby, anyway," said Simon, scornfully.

"What has he been doing to you, Vivian?" asked the other boy, kindly.

"He hit me twice!"

"What did you do that for?"

"I told you before it was none of your business," returned Simon Musgrave, sullenly. "If you're not careful, I'll serve you the same way!"

"You will, eh? I should like to see you do it!" replied Jim Rawdon, not in the least terrified by Musgrave's threats, even if he were the son of the head master.

Simon Musgrave scowled at the intrepid boy, but he knew very well that it would not do to treat him as he had Vivian Bell. Simon was a born bully, and bullies are generally cowards.

He took advantage of Vivian Bell's gentleness, but he held in unwilling respect James Rawdon's strength and pluck.

"I'll report your insolence to my father," he said, biting his nether lip.

"Do," retorted Rawdon. "Go and complain to your pa like an overgrown baby!"

Simon was in such a passion that he ached to strike Rawdon, but prudence got the better of temper, and he refrained.

Turning to Vivian, he said: "You heard what I told you to do. Go and do it!"

"What did you tell him to do?" asked Rawdon.

"I told him to go to the village on an errand for me."

"Why don't you go yourself?"

"Because I don't choose to."

"I would go if I hadn't a headache," interposed Vivian, putting his hand to his head and sighing. "It's very bad."

"It's all put on," said Simon, brutally. "Your head doesn't ache any more than mine does."

"Indeed, indeed it does!"

James Rawdon listened to Simon with a disgust for his brutality which he did not attempt to conceal.

"Don't you go, Bell," he said. "I'll stand by you."

"Look here, Rawdon, don't put in your oar! You'll get into trouble!"

"Who's going to get me into trouble?"

"I am."

"Come on, then!" and Jim Rawdon put himself in an attitude of defence.

"Oh, I sha'n't touch you! I'd scorn to fight you; but I'll report you and Bell to my father."

"I've been reported to your father before now," said Rawdon, significantly.

It was quite true that Jim Rawdon had little to fear from Dr. Musgrave. He was a resolute and determined boy, who would not permit anyone to impose upon him.

His father was a wealthy merchant in London, and it so happened that Dr. Musgrave was under a pecuniary obligation to the senior Rawdon to the extent of five hundred pounds. These two considerations made Jim a privileged character.

Simon, however, knew nothing of the pecuniary relations between his father and Mr. Rawdon, and was now thoroughly incensed, especially when Rawdon, taking Vivian Bell under his protection, walked off with him.

"I'll go and complain to my father!" exclaimed Simon, wrathfully.

"Go along! Come with me, Vivian!"

Vivian, influenced by the older and stronger boy, obeyed him.

"Now, Vivian," said Rawdon, "tell me why you let that brute impose upon you?"

"Because I can't help it, Rawdon."

"That's something I wouldn't say."

"You don't need to. You are strong—oh, so strong!" returned Vivian, admiringly.

"I am not as strong as Dr. Musgrave, but he never touches me."

"He has flogged me often."

"The old brute! And yet you are always gentle and inoffensive."

"I try to be good and obey the rules, but the doctor is always finding fault with me."

"That's his way."

"I can't seem to please him."

"Then why don't you give it up?"

"I don't understand you, Rawdon."

"Then I'll tell you, Vivian. If I were treated as you are I'd leave the school."

"But how can I?"

"Who put you here?"

"My guardian."

"Then why don't you ask him to take you away?"

"I'll tell you something, Rawdon, if you won't tell."

"Of course I won't tell! What do you take me for?"

"I wrote to my guardian four months ago, telling him how I was treated here."

"Four months ago! And haven't you had any answer?"

"No. You see, he lives in Bombay."

Jim Rawdon whistled.

"Bombay! That's a terrible distance off!"

"Yes. It takes a long time for a letter to reach there. That's the reason I haven't yet heard from him?"

"Did you ask him to take you away?"

"Yes; and I do hope he will."

"Very likely he won't. If he lives so far off, very likely he won't take any trouble in the matter."

"Oh, I hope he will!"

"If I were you I would take the matter into my own hands. I'd run away!"

Vivian Bell almost gasped at the daring suggestion.

"But what could I do if I did run away? I haven't any money; that is, I have only half a crown."

"I've got two half-sovereigns, and you may have one of them."

"You're awfully kind, Rawdon. Would you really advise me to run away?"

"Yes, I would."

"Where shall I go first?"

"There's a farmer four miles away on the Bolton Road. His name is Giles Glover. Go there and ask him to keep you for a couple of days. You can pay him, you know. Tell him I sent you. He's a friend of mine."

"But after the two days?"

"I'll call over and have a talk with you. I can ride with the carrier, so it won't be any trouble. Then I'll arrange something for you. Perhaps I may send you to London with a letter to my father."

"But if the doctor catches me?" asked Vivian, with a shiver.

"The doctor won't catch you. I'll put him off the scent."

"I don't know, Rawdon. It seems a very bold thing to do."

The conversation was interrupted here, for Simon Musgrave came up with a triumphant smile on his face.

"Rawdon and Bell are wanted," he said. "You are to report at once to my father at his office."

CHAPTER XI

AN INDEPENDENT PUPIL

SIMON MUSGRAVE walked away, not doubting that the two boys would obey orders.

"What shall I do, Rawdon?" asked Vivian, in a state of nervous alarm. "The doctor will be sure to flog me!"

"Then don't go near him."

"But he will come for me."

"Then mind you are not to be found."

"What do you mean?"

"Go to your room, get a few underclothes, and run away. Remember where I told you to go. You know where Farmer Glover lives?"

"Yes."

"Go there. Ask him to keep you till I come."

"But will he?"

"I am sure he will. He hates Dr. Musgrave, who tried to cheat him out of pay for some hay he bought of him. You'll find him to be a good friend."

"It seems a bold thing to do, Rawdon, but if you say I had better, I will be guided by you."

"That is right. Now lose no time in going to your room, and I will delay matters so that you will have a chance to get away."

"Shall you go to see the doctor?"

"Yes; I am not afraid of him."

Jim Rawdon loitered about the quadrangle, and it was nearly fifteen minutes before he presented himself near the office. Simon had been sent out to look for him.

"Why don't you go to my father's office?" he demanded.

"There is no hurry," returned Rawdon, composedly.

"You'll find out if there isn't. Pa's awful mad; I can tell you that."

"Then he'd better get over it as soon as possible. It isn't healthy for an old man like him to get into a rage."

"I hope he'll flog you!" said Simon, exasperated at Rawdon's coolness.

"You were always kind and friendly, Simon. Just as sure as he tries to flog me, I'll flog you!"

"Where is Bell? Has he gone to the office?" said Simon, who felt that Rawdon would be very likely to carry out his threat.

"What have I got to do with Bell? Isn't he in the office now?"

"If he isn't it'll be worse for him. Pa isn't in a humor to be trifled with."

Five minutes later Jim Rawdon sauntered into the office of Dr. Musgrave.

The doctor was sitting at his desk. His face was stern and wrathful.

"Where is Bell?" he asked, abruptly.

"I can't tell you, sir."

"Wasn't he with you when my son Simon summoned you to my office?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then how is it you don't know where Bell is?"

"I am not his guardian, Dr. Musgrave. We separated, and I did not trouble myself to see where he went. Hasn't he been here?"

"No, he hasn't," answered the doctor, sharply. "How happens it that you come so late?"

"Simon didn't tell me there was any particular hurry."

"My orders are always to be obeyed at once!"

"Very well, sir."

"You'd better remember that next time."

"I am here now. What did you wish to see me about?"

"I understand that you have treated my son Simon with disrespect."

"Please be more explicit, sir," said Rawdon, with exasperating coolness.

The doctor bit his lip. He felt that Rawdon was impertinent, though his language was strictly respectful.

"You interfered between him and Bell."

"I did. I saw that he was bullying Bell, and I interfered to protect Bell."

"What business was it of yours?"

"Sir," said Rawdon, with dignity, "I am an English boy, and I can't stand by and see a younger boy bullied by an older and stronger one."

"Do you think I will allow you to interfere with my son? If you had any complaints to make, you should have come to me."

"There was no time for it."

"Simon tells me that he asked Bell to go to the village on an errand for him."

"Bell had a headache, and was not fit to run errands."

"You could have told me that."

"And in the meantime Bell would have been on his way to the village."

"Hark you, Rawdon! You are taking too much on yourself!"

Jim Rawdon made no reply.

"And if this continues I shall feel compelled to flog you!"

"I think you had better not, Dr. Musgrave," said Rawdon, in a significant tone.

"Why not, sir?" demanded the doctor, angrily.

"Because my father won't permit it. He told me when I came to school to report to him if you laid your hand on me."

Dr. Musgrave winced. He had reason to believe that Jim told the truth, and he knew that he was under obligations to the senior Rawdon, who might make things uncomfortable.

"I don't allow any outsider to interfere with my discipline," he said, "but I will postpone your case till I have dealt with Bell. You say you don't know where he is?"

"No, sir."

"Have you any idea where he went when he left you?"

"I think he may have gone to his room."

"Did he understand that I sent for him?"

"I presume so, Dr. Musgrave. I didn't ask him."

"You may go to his room and see if he is there. If so, tell him to come here directly."

Rawdon left the office.

Outside stood Simon Musgrave.

"Did my father flog you?" he asked, maliciously.

"You had better ask him."

"I hope he did."

"By the way, Simon, have you seen Bell?"

"No."

"Your father thinks he may be in his room. Will you go and tell him, if you find him there, that he is to go to the office?"

This was to Simon an agreeable errand, and without asking whether it was desired by the doctor that he should go, he set off at once.

He returned in a brief space of time, saying:

"I can't find him."

"Then you might tell your father; or shall I do so?"

"I'll go in."

"I've been round to Bell's room, pa," he said, "but he isn't there."

"Inquire around among the boys if anyone has seen him," answered the doctor, frowning.

"Did you flog Rawdon?" asked Simon, eagerly.

"Not yet. Do as I told you."

Inquiry was made among the pupils, but if anyone had seen Vivian Bell, no one would give information on the subject.

At length an under-gardener said: "I seen him

going off Bolton way. He had a bundle under his arm. He looked like he was running away."

"Bell running away!" exclaimed Dr. Musgrave, scandalized. "Why, he wouldn't *dare* to do such a thing!"

"You know best, sir," said the gardener, humbly.

"If he has run away," said Dr. Musgrave, setting his teeth, "I'll half kill him when I get him back!"

Jim Rawdon was summoned again.

"Rawdon," said Dr. Musgrave, abruptly, "has Bell ever said anything to you about running away?"

"Has he run away?" asked Rawdon, innocently, looking immensely surprised.

"Answer my question, sir."

"I can't say that he has, sir, although he has complained of being badly treated."

"No one is badly treated here!" roared the doctor, furiously. "What do you mean by such an insinuation?"

Jim Rawdon did not seem terrified by the doctor's angry outburst.

"I am not saying he was ill treated," he replied, "but——"

"Well?"

"I think he was."

"You are the most impudent boy I have in my school! How dare you talk in this way?"

Rawdon merely shrugged his shoulders.

Dr. Musgrave wished he might set off at once in pursuit of the missing pupil, but he could not break away from his duties.

"I'll go for him, pa," volunteered Simon.

"No; I will wait till to-morrow morning, and go myself."

"But he may get away for good and all!"

"He can't go far, for he has no money. I am not afraid of losing him."

CHAPTER XII

HOW VIVIAN ESCAPED

WHEN Vivian Bell parted from Jim Rawdon he strictly followed the directions of his schoolmate. He went hurriedly to his room, made up a bundle of underclothing, and then crossing the grounds in nervous haste, started on the Bolton Road.

He knew the way, for he had often gone in this direction on holidays, usually with a company of his schoolfellows.

He had hardly time to consider the importance of the step he was taking. He was animated by a feverish desire to get as far away as possible from the school where he was ill treated.

He feared and detested the head master, who, to the best of his remembrance, had never spoken a kindly word to him.

He would never of his own impulse have dared to run away, but the stronger will of Jim Rawdon dominated him.

As he hurried along on a rustic road between

two delightful hedge-rows, he looked backward from time to time with nervous apprehension, almost expecting to see the tall, gaunt figure of Dr. Musgrave following him in hot pursuit, or the red head and malicious face of his young tormentor, Simon.

But when a mile away he began to feel less apprehension. He was confident that Rawdon would somehow cover his flight and put the pursuers off his track.

An unwonted sense of freedom came to him.

"Oh, if I could get away entirely from Dr. Musgrave!" he thought. "I would be willing to work hard. Perhaps some farmer would engage me. I would not mind hard work as long as I was well treated."

It is a very serious thing when a teacher who should be the guardian and guide of his pupils inspires dread and abhorrence. It is difficult to estimate how much unhappiness is occasioned by such unprincipled tyrants as Dr. Peter Musgrave, the head master of Milton School.

It seems a pity that they could not for a time change places with some of the pupils they abuse, as is done in the ingenious story, "Vice Versa."

Vivian had walked about two miles when he was overtaken by the carrier in his cart.

All the boys of Milton School knew Jack Hunt, who was a good-natured man of middle age.

"Where are you going, Master Bell?" asked the carrier, slackening his speed.

Vivian turned round and answered: "Won't you ever tell, Jack?"

"No, I won't," answered Jack, stoutly.

"Then I am running away."

"You don't mean it now, Master Bell?" exclaimed Jack, half incredulous.

"Yes, Jack, it's true."

"What! Running away from the schoolmaster?"

"Yes, Jack."

"Then I'll be danged if I blame thee, lad. He's a brute, he is."

"He's treated me brutally, Jack."

"But I say, Master Bell, I didn't think thee had it in thee. Why, I didn't think thee had the pluck to run away."

"I don't think I would, Jack, if it hadn't been for Jim Rawdon."

"Ah, yes, Rawdon. He's a plucky lad. He wouldn't let the master flog him."

"No, I don't think Dr. Musgrave ever flogged Rawdon."

"But he's flogged thee?"

"Oh, many a time," answered Vivian, shuddering. "Oh, he has beat me cruelly."

"I'd like to get at him," said Jack, shutting his teeth firmly together. "I'd like to get at him with a horsewhip, that I would!"

"But Simon is almost as bad."

"That's the schoolmaster's boy. I know that Simon. He's got an ugly temper, he has. And he's impudent, too."

"Did you ever have any trouble with him, Jack?"

The carrier laughed.

"He's had trouble with me," he answered. "I'll tell you how it was. I was drivin' along one day, just as you see me now, when Simon came up, and, just out of ugliness, picked up a stone and fired it at my 'orse. Well, I wouldn't stand that, you know, so I jumps off my cart and I ran after the boy whip in hand."

"Did he run away?"

"No; he stood his ground. He thought I wouldn't dare to hit him. So when I said: 'Why did you go to do that?' he answered, impudent like: 'Because I chose.' With that I took my whip and slashed him about the legs till he jumped and swore."

"You lashed Simon Musgrave?" asked Vivian, almost incredulous.

"Yes, I did. Oh, wasn't he mad, though! He threatened that he would tell his pa, and have me locked up."

"I am glad to hear that. It does me good! And you really and truly lashed Simon?"

"Ask him if I didn't."

"I wonder he didn't tell the doctor."

"I told him I would have him arrested for stoning my 'orse."

"I would like to have been there."

Vivian Bell was far from being a vindictive boy, but it seemed to do him good to hear that his persistent young persecutor had for once had the same treatment meted out to him that he had so often inflicted upon others.

"Where are you going, Master Bell?" asked the carrier, with a sudden thought.

"Rawdon told me I'd better go to Farmer Glover's, and ask him to take me in over-night."

"And a good plan it is; but you're only half way to Giles Glover's."

"I'm not tired, Jack. I shall be able to walk."

"There's no need of walking. I'm going all the way there myself. So just jump up into my

cart, Master Bell, and I'll have you there in a jiffy."

Vivian was glad to accept this offer, and in a minute he was in the cart, riding beside Jack, the carrier.

"I am afraid I will get you into trouble, Jack," said Vivian, after a pause.

"Never you think of that, Master Bell. You don't think the doctor'll be flogging me, do you, now?" asked the carrier, with a broad grin.

"No; I don't think he would do that."

"I would like to see him try it, I would."

"But he might refuse to employ you."

"As I am the only carrier hereabouts he wouldn't do that."

"Well, you are very kind, Jack."

"And why wouldn't I be? I'd help any of the schoolboys. There's one thing I'd like to help them in."

"And what's that?"

"To flog the schoolmaster. That would be rare fun."

So Vivian Bell and his good friend the carrier sped along till they came in sight of the farmhouse occupied by Giles Glover.

It so happened that the farmer himself was out in the yard when the carrier drove up.

They greeted each other like old friends.

"And whom have you got with you, Jack?" asked the farmer.

"I've got a boarder for you, farmer."

"I don't understand. Isn't this one of Dr. Musgrave's boys?"

"Yes; and he's run away from school."

"You don't say! And what for?"

"Because the doctor has been flogging him almost every day, till he's tired of it. Will you take him in for a night?"

"Aye, that I will! But what are you going to do, lad?"

"I will wait here till Jim Rawdon comes. He will advise me."

"Aye! I know Rawdon. He is a manly boy, Rawdon is."

"It was he that advised me to run away."

"But have you any money, lad? You know you can't get along without money."

"Yes, I have a little money. I will pay you for taking me in."

"No, you won't, lad! Giles Glover wants no pay from a poor, persecuted lad. There's plenty to eat here, and you're heartily welcome to it. But have you nothing to live on? Where is your father, lad?"

"I have no father nor mother."

"Then who pays your bills?"

"My guardian."

"Then why don't you go to him?"

"I can't. He lives in Bombay. That's ever so many thousands of miles off. I have written to him, and I hoped to hear from him before this time."

"Wouldn't it have been better to wait?"

"I couldn't," said Vivian, wearily. "It is four months since I wrote."

"But how will you get along?"

"If I can get to London I will go to my guardian's bankers."

"Well, I will keep thee at any rate for a night or two, and it sha'n't cost thee a penny."

Soon after Vivian's arrival he sat down to a plentiful supper. He ate heartily, and his courage rose. He was surrounded by humble but cordial friends, and the atmosphere of kindness was as grateful as it was new to him.

But it would not be long before his place of concealment would be discovered, and his foes be on his track.

CHAPTER XIII

DR. MUSGRAVE RECEIVES INFORMATION

It so happened, though Vivian did not know it, that he was seen riding with Jack the carrier by a boy named Jarvis, connected with Milton School.

Jarvis was a toady to Simon, and strove to ingratiate himself with Dr. Musgrave by carrying him tales of his schoolmates.

Hidden behind the shrubbery, Jarvis saw the carrier's cart with Bell as passenger.

He had been to Bolton to call on an aunt.

On his return to the school he heard of Vivian Bell's disappearance.

Jarvis congratulated himself on being the first to carry news of his missing scholar to the head master.

In crossing the campus he fell in with Simon.

"What's the news, Simon?" he asked.

"Bell has run away!"

"Do you know where he has gone?"

"No; but pa'll catch him, I'm sure of that. I

wouldn't like to be in his shoes then, I can tell you!"

"Didn't anybody see him go?"

"No; I had just told him pa wanted to see him in the office, and I supposed he would report there. I'll tell you who knows something about his going away."

"Who is it?"

"Rawdon. He was with him, and I feel sure that he put Bell up to running away."

"Very likely. Bell's a milk-and-water chap. He wouldn't dare to run away unless someone put him up to it. Have you any idea in what direction he went?"

"No."

"Humph!"

"What do you mean by your mysterious manner. Do you know anything about his going away?"

"Well, I might have found out something," answered Jarvis.

"If you know anything it's your duty to tell *me* right off," said Simon, imperiously.

Jarvis, in general, acquiesced in anything that Simon said, but he was aware of the importance of the information he had to offer, and chose to get all the credit himself.

"Why is it my duty to tell *you?*" he asked.

"So that I may tell pa."

"It will do just as well if I tell him."

"No, it won't. You tell me, and I will go to the office at once and tell pa."

"There is no need to trouble you, Simon. Whatever there is to tell I can tell myself."

"I don't believe you've got anything to tell," said Simon, cunningly.

"Nothing much, only that I saw Bell when he was running away."

"Where did you see him?" asked Simon, eagerly.

"That's what I am ready to tell your father."

Simon made another attempt to obtain the information, but failing, he escorted Jarvis to the office of Dr. Musgrave.

"Pa," he said, bustling in, "there's some news of Bell."

"What is it?" asked the master, looking up from the desk.

"Jarvis saw him running away."

Jarvis, who had followed Simon into the office, now pressed forward.

"Well, Jarvis, what have you to tell?" asked the doctor.

"This afternoon I saw Bell riding over the Bolton Road with Jack Hunt, the carrier."

"Ha! that man is in it! I am not surprised. His influence over my pupils is very demoralizing. He will get into trouble if he is not very careful."

"Can't you have him arrested, pa?" said Simon, who had a grievance of his own against the independent carrier.

"That depends on his connection with the affair. In what direction was the carrier going?"

"Toward Bolton, sir."

"Did he or Bell see you?"

"No, sir. I was hiding behind the hedge."

"What else did you see?"

"Bell had a bundle with him."

"Ha! a bundle of clothes, no doubt! What time was this?"

Jarvis mentioned the hour.

"He must have started about the time I told him to go to your office, pa."

"Probably. Simon, do you know where the carrier lives?"

"Yes, pa."

"What time does he get back from Bolton?"

"About six o'clock."

"Very well; go there at that time and ask him to step around to see me."

"All right, pa."

This was an errand which Simon enjoyed. He

reached the carrier's house just as Jack was unharnessing his horse.

"I say, Jack," he began, "pa wants to see you right off."

"Does he?" returned the carrier. "You can tell him where I am. If he will come round here he can see me."

"He wants to see you at his office."

"Well, I haven't time to go there. My supper is waiting for me. Do you know what he wants to see me about?"

"Yes; it's about Bell. He was seen riding with you this afternoon."

"Oh, he was, was he? Did *you* see him riding with me?"

"No, but Jarvis did; so there's no use of your denying it."

"I don't deny it. Master Bell is always welcome to ride with me, but I wouldn't take you on my cart, nor yet that Jarvis."

"I say, you'd better be careful. Pa ain't going to have you help his boys run away."

"Who's run away?" asked Jack, innocently.

"Why, Bell, of course. You don't mean to say you didn't know it?"

"Master Bell run away! You don't mean it!

Why should he run away from such a kind man as your father?"

"Because he was a bad boy. He always disobeyed the rules," said Simon, sharply.

"You don't mean to tell me so! And I thought he was such a good, quiet boy."

"Where did you leave him?"

"Where did I leave him? I didn't leave him anywhere. He left me."

"Where was it?"

"On the road."

"Did he tell you where he expected to spend the night?"

"He might, and again he mightn't. I am so forgetful that I never minds what's told me. It just goes into one ear and out of the other."

Finding he could get no certain information out of the carrier, Simon started to go, threatening him with arrest for conniving at the escape of Vivian Bell.

"You don't really think your pa would have me arrested, do you, Simon?" asked the carrier, pretending to be very much frightened.

"You just see!"

"You'll speak a good word for me, won't you? You see it would be bad for my business to be arrested."

"You ought to have thought of that," said Simon, under the impression that Jack was weakening. "Your only course is to tell pa all you know about Bell, and just where he's gone."

"I remember now he told me where he was going."

"Where?" asked Simon, eagerly.

"To London."

"To London!" repeated Simon, in disgust. "Why, he'd have to walk all the way!"

"I don't know anything about that."

"Why didn't you turn right round and bring him back to the school? Pa'd have given you a sixpence."

"Would he, now?"

"Yes; I am sure he would."

"I can't leave my business for any such trifle as a sixpence. Besides, it wasn't any of my business carrying back your father's runaway scholars."

"Perhaps you'll change your mind, Mr. Jack."

"I'll make one promise."

"What's that?"

"If I ever see you running away I'll carry you back."

Simon did not deign a reply to this, but turning on his heel walked out of the yard.

As he left, he said: "You'd better go round and see pa after supper."

"He knows where he can find me," returned the carrier, in a sturdy tone.

Arrived at the school, Simon went at once to his father's study, and reported that the carrier would not obey his command.

"Never mind, Simon," said Dr. Musgrave. "The grocer has just been here and told me that Bell is staying at Giles Glover's farm. I shall go for him to-morrow morning."

CHAPTER XIV

GUY FENWICK REACHES MILTON SCHOOL

GUY FENWICK, accompanied by his friend and fellow passenger, August Locke, started from London early in the morning, bound for Milton.

Reaching the station, Locke proposed to Guy to walk to the school.

"It is only half a mile," he said, "and it will be a pleasure to me to take a leisurely stroll over the road that was once so familiar to me."

"I am quite willing," said Guy. "It is a charming morning, and the country is beautiful."

"More so than America?"

"I must confess," said Guy, "that I know of no landscape in America that equals the charm of an English village."

It was a bright, sunshiny day. The hedge-rows were a dark green. They passed a church overgrown with ivy, and the air was perfumed by sweet flowers.

"How often I have been over this road," said August Locke.

"Did you enjoy your schooldays, Mr. Locke?"

"I should have done so if we had had a better teacher. Dr. Musgrave's tyranny spoiled all."

"Did he abuse you?"

"As much as he dared; but when he went too far my temper got the better of me, and I was ready for anything. I think he knew that, for he did not treat me as badly as some of his pupils who were more timid. How are your American schools?"

"No doubt we have some tyrannical teachers, but the one whose school I attended was a gentleman. He was firm and yet gentle, and all we boys respected and liked him."

"With such a teacher as you describe Milton School would be a paradise."

"I don't see how Dr. Musgrave can retain his position. Does he own the school?"

"No; he is employed by the directors. Most of them live at a distance, and know nothing of his administration. If complaints were made to them they would pay no attention to them. They would take the ground that there is a natural antagonism between pupils and teachers."

"So the poor boys have little hope of having their wrongs redressed?"

"You are about right."

The distance between the station and the school was so short that by the time their conversation was over they had nearly reached the gate that led into the school-ground.

"It looks just as it did when I left," said August Locke, surveying the building and campus with interest. "I can almost imagine that it was only yesterday I went away."

"Except when you look in the glass."

"Yes; I have grown from a boy into a man of twenty-five. I should be more than a match for old Musgrave now," and the young man regarded with satisfaction his muscular arms and well-knit figure.

"Really," he added, "I shouldn't mind if there were occasion, having a tussle with the old fellow. I fancy he wouldn't stand long before his old pupil."

There were several boys scattered about the campus.

August Locke and Guy entered, and looked about them for someone whom they could interrogate.

The nearest was a stout, well-knit boy, with a strong, resolute face, and a frank expression. In fact, it was Jim Rawdon, already introduced as the friend and adviser of Vivian Bell.

"My boy," said Locke, with pleasant courtesy, "can you tell me if Dr. Musgrave is in his office?"

"No, sir; not this morning."

"Isn't that rather strange—at this hour? You see, I am an old pupil, and haven't forgotten the ways of the place."

"He is usually here, sir; but he made an early start to hunt up a pupil who ran away a day or two since."

"What is the name of the pupil?" asked Guy, quickly.

"Vivian Bell."

"I thought so," said Guy.

"Are you a friend of Bell?" asked Rawdon.

"Yes; I am more than a friend, though I never saw him. I am sent here by his guardian."

"But I thought his guardian lived in Bombay?"

"So he does; but I come from Bombay."

"I am glad of it," said Rawdon.

"Are you a friend of Vivian?" asked Guy.

"Yes; I am about the only friend the poor boy has in this place."

"Do you mean that he is generally unpopular?"

"No; we all like him; but I am the only one who dares stand up for him."

"His guardian received a letter complaining that he was ill treated by the head master."

"That is true enough. He has been very badly treated."

"Why? Isn't he a good boy?"

"Yes. The trouble is that he is too good and gentle. Dr. Musgrave felt that it would be safe to bully him, and he has done so."

"You are not giving Dr. Musgrave a very good character."

"He doesn't deserve one."

"In what way has Vivian been ill treated?"

"He has been flogged two or three times a week on an average."

"Without deserving it?"

"Yes."

"What excuse can the doctor have for flogging him?"

"Well, to begin with, Simon is down upon him."

"Who is Simon?"

"Simon Musgrave, the doctor's son. He's as bad as his father, and I don't know but worse."

"Have you had anything to complain of?"

"No. He doesn't dare to meddle with me. I thrashed him once so effectually that he thinks it wisest to let me alone."

"Coming back to Vivian, you say that Dr. Musgrave has gone in search of him?"

"Yes; he started early, accompanied by Simon."

"Then I suppose he had information as to his whereabouts?"

"Yes. He heard that he was at Giles Glover's farm, about four miles away."

"Will he probably find him there?"

"I am afraid so. It was I who advised him to run away, and I told him to go to Giles Glover's."

"Perhaps he may have left there."

"No. He was to wait till I got a chance to go and see him. I haven't had any chance yet. Bell is a timid boy, and he wouldn't know where to go. I meant to start him to London to see his guardian's bankers."

"Let me shake hands with you," said Guy, impulsively. "I am proud to know you. You have had the courage to be a friend to a boy who was badly abused. What is your name?"

"Jim Rawdon."

"Mine is Guy Fenwick. I am an American boy."

"And yet you are sent here by Bell's guardian," said Rawdon, in surprise.

"Yes. It is too long a story to explain now."

"I like you, even if you are not English," said Rawdon. "Do what you can for Bell."

"That is what I have come here for. What will happen if Dr. Musgrave captures him?"

"He will flog Bell before the whole school, worse than he ever did before."

"You may rest assured that he won't do that," said August Locke. "I think I shall have something to say."

Jim Rawdon's face glowed with pleasure.

"I'm glad to hear that," he said. "Oh, won't there be a high old time!"

"I fancy there will. I was once a pupil of Dr. Musgrave, and I owe him a few returns for past favors. Does he often flog you?"

"He never has yet," said Rawdon. "He knows that my father would take me away instantly if he tried it. Besides—I don't mind telling you two—he owes my father borrowed money, and that makes him cautious."

"I am glad that you, at any rate, are safe. So Simon is no improvement on his father?"

"No. If you were here as a pupil, how is it you don't remember Simon?"

"He was only a small boy then, perhaps six years old, and I was not likely to know anything of him."

"Shall you stay here till the doctor returns?"

"Yes. It will be our best course. You don't think the doctor will attempt to punish Bell before he gets him back?"

"No. That isn't his way. He will call the

school together, and give him a cruel flogging before all the boys. I have often seen such punishment, and it makes my blood boil; but what could I do?"

Five minutes later Rawdon called out in excitement:

"There comes the doctor! Simon and Bell are with him!"

August Locke and Guy looked up the road. A wagon was approaching, drawn by a bony-looking horse.

Simon was driving. On the back seat was Dr. Musgrave, tall, thin, with a stern-looking visage, and beside him Vivian Bell, his face red and tearful.

He well knew what a terrible punishment awaited him.

CHAPTER XV

DR. MUSGRAVE'S HUMILIATION

DR. MUSGRAVE was so occupied with thoughts of the punishment that he proposed to inflict on the poor boy whom he had captured that he did not notice the visitors, who stood at one side of the path leading to his office.

Simon brought up the wagon in front of the gate.

Dr. Musgrave jumped out, and then extended his hand to Vivian Bell.

"Give me your hand!" he said gruffly.

The poor boy tremblingly held out his hand, which was grasped roughly by the tyrant. He was jerked out with no gentle motion.

"Now, Simon, give me the whip!"

Dr. Musgrave grasped it, and seizing Vivian by the collar, began to push him before him up the path.

Guy and August Locke looked on in disgust and anger.

"Speak to him, Mr. Locke," whispered Guy.

"Dr. Musgrave!" said August, in a clear, cold voice.

Then for the first time the head master turned his attention to the newcomers.

"I will be at your service in a few moments," he said, waving his hand.

He thought that August Locke wished to enter Guy at his school.

"That will not do, Dr. Musgrave. I wish your attention now!"

Dr. Musgrave, whose temper was none of the best, took umbrage at this.

"You will have to wait!" he said, sharply. "I have to mete out justice to this young rascal, who had the audacity to run away from me. I have just recovered him, and I intend to flog him in the presence of the school. You can be present, if you like."

"Dr. Musgrave," said Locke, sternly, "this flogging shall not take place!"

"What!" exclaimed the head master, with blazing eyes. "Do you come here to interfere with my discipline?"

"I do; or rather we do."

"I never heard of such audacity!" exclaimed Dr. Musgrave, fairly aghast.

"Is not this boy Vivian Bell?"

"Yes."

"Then you shall not flog him!"

Dr. Musgrave was exasperated beyond endurance. He had been accustomed to move among his pupils like an Eastern despot, with no one bold enough to oppose him.

"This is my answer," he said, grasping the whip, and lashing Vivian across the legs, eliciting a cry of pain.

"And this is mine!" said August Locke.

He snatched the whip from the head master, grasped him by the collar, and with all the strength he possessed rained down blows across the teacher's legs.

Dr. Musgrave shrieked with anger and dismay. As he did so he let go of Vivian Bell.

Guy instantly drew the trembling boy to his side.

"What do you mean by this outrage?" demanded Dr. Musgrave. "Give me back that whip!"

"You cannot be trusted with it," said Locke, coolly.

Dr. Musgrave, fairly boiling with passion, made a spring for Vivian, but August Locke anticipated the movement, and brought down the whip over the head master's shoulders.

"Boys, come to the help of your teacher!" shrieked Musgrave.

Not a boy stirred except Simon.

He ran forward, and tried to attack Vivian Bell.

Guy let go of Vivian, and with a well-directed blow stretched Simon on the ground.

"What do you mean by this outrage? Who are you?" asked the head master, pale and agitated.

"I, sir, am August Locke, once your pupil," replied Locke. "I am paying you off for some of your former brutality."

"I will have you arrested—yes, and you, too!" shaking his head at Guy.

"Let me introduce my young companion, Dr. Musgrave," went on Locke. "He is Master Guy Fenwick. He comes here as the agent of Mr. John Saunders, of Bombay, the guardian of Vivian Bell."

"Is this true?" asked the head master, bewildered and incredulous.

"Yes, sir," answered Guy. "I came here to find out how the boy was treated, but I have seen for myself. I withdraw him from your school. He is no longer a pupil of yours!"

Vivian Bell's expression changed at once. He looked overjoyed.

"Oh!" he said, "is this true?"

"Yes," answered Guy, putting his hand caressingly on the boy's shoulder. "I shall take you away with me."

Dr. Musgrave, though still shaking with anger, was not wholly destitute of prudence.

"Gentlemen," he said, "before anything is decided upon, I wish to explain that this boy has committed a daring act of rebellion, an act which merits summary punishment."

Vivian looked up nervously into Guy's face, but the expression he saw there reassured him.

"Yes, sir; he ran away," said August Locke, "and any boy would be justified in running away under the circumstances."

"Sir," said Dr. Musgrave, striving to recover some of his lost dignity, "in a school like this there must be discipline."

"Yes, but not brutality."

"You have evidently been misinformed as to the character of my discipline. It is firm, but parental."

"Dr. Musgrave," retorted August Locke, with a disgust which he could not conceal, "you forget that I was a former pupil of yours. Of all the abominable tyrants to be found in English schools, I think you carry off the palm."

"I had hoped, Mr. Locke—I remember you new—that your maturer judgment would have enabled you to understand the reason of my occasional severity. My own conscience justifies me in what I have done."

"Then you have a peculiar conscience; that is all I have to say."

"If this boy—as I can hardly believe—represents Bell's guardian, I will describe to him the flagrant acts of disobedience of which his ward has been guilty. Surely he will not justify a pupil in running away from his school!"

"Under the circumstances I do, sir."

"I trust you will leave Bell here till the end of the term, four weeks hence."

Vivian Bell looked alarmed.

"I must decline to do so, Dr. Musgrave."

"I shall, under the rules of the school, charge to the end of the term."

"You can do so, sir, but I shall withdraw Vivian to-day."

"I claim the right, before he leaves, to inflict punishment for the act of rebellion of which he has been guilty."

"So it would afford you satisfaction to flog him, Dr. Musgrave?" said August Locke, with a sarcastic smile.

"No, sir. I am always pained when I have to chastise a pupil, but it is necessary to the maintenance of my authority over the other boys that Bell's offense should not go unpunished."

"Your authority will have to take care of itself, Dr. Musgrave. You are fortunate that I do not punish you for your past brutality!"

"Mr. Locke, a higher-handed outrage was never perpetrated than your interference with my authority, and your assault upon myself."

"You are quite welcome to take any view of it you choose. Guy, I think you ought to take immediate steps toward the withdrawal of your young ward."

"Dr. Musgrave, will you direct that my ward's trunk be packed, and all made ready for his departure? When this is done I will settle your bill."

"I protest once more against your remarkable proceedings. I shall write to Mr. Saunders and complain of them."

"You are at liberty to do so. In the meanwhile, please have the boy's clothes packed."

The humiliation of Dr. Musgrave was the greater because nearly all his pupils had been witnesses of it. Though they had not manifested their feelings in any way, there was not one, except Simon,

his son, who was not rejoiced when they saw the tables turned upon their tyrannical teacher.

Dr. Musgrave hesitated, but Guy's bold, resolute bearing convinced him that opposition would be useless.

If he could have retained Vivian Bell to the end of the term he would have had an opportunity to make him suffer, and thus obtained some satisfaction; but Guy saw through his scheme, and resolutely vetoed it. He would not allow Vivian to remain an hour longer, but declared his intention of taking him away with him at once.

When the doctor went inside to give orders about packing Vivian's trunk, Jim Rawdon went up to Guy and shook hands with him.

"You are a brave boy," he said. "I never enjoyed myself more than I have in the last half hour. It was fun to see the doctor under the lash."

"I wish you could leave the school, too," said Guy.

"I shall soon. I am in no danger of a flogging, though. The doctor doesn't dare to flog me."

CHAPTER XVI

GUY FINISHES UP HIS BUSINESS IN LONDON

WHEN Vivian Bell found himself on a railroad train, in the company of his new friends, bound for London, he was like one from whom a heavy burden had been lifted. He became light-hearted and lively.

"I am so happy," he said, impulsively.

"I am afraid you have never been very happy at the school," returned Guy.

"No, never! Dr. Musgrave has always been unkind to me," said Vivian, with a shudder.

"He would probably have punished you very severely if we had not made our appearance."

"He would have almost killed me. He was frightfully angry at my running away. How strong your friend is," he added, looking at August Locke admiringly.

August smiled. He was human, and he was pleased with the compliment.

"I think I was too much for the doctor," he said.

"but the time was when he had the advantage of me. I have been flogged more than once in my schooldays; but I fancy I deserved it more than you. You don't look to me like a very bad boy."

"The doctor said I was, but indeed I tried to do my duty. Yet he was always flogging me."

"Rawdon was your friend, was he not?"

"Yes; he was my only friend. He was always ready to stand up for me."

"The doctor never flogged him?"

"No; I don't see why, for he wasn't a model boy, though he was a good friend to me."

"He seemed like a trump. I'm sorry I didn't tip him. I say, Guy, I mean to send him a couple of guineas, just to show my appreciation of his pluck and friendship for your ward."

"No; it is I who ought to do that."

"We'll do it together."

For a few days Guy kept Vivian with him at the hotel. He set himself to explore London, visiting all the noted places usually sought by strangers, and this the boy thoroughly enjoyed.

Guy determined to give him some pleasure after his long thralldom at school.

On the sixth day, in walking up the Strand, he and Vivian were surprised to meet Jim Rawdon.

Rawdon saw them first.

"Hallo, you two! I was in hopes to meet you," he said.

"But how do you happen to be in London?" asked Guy. "You haven't run away from school, have you?"

"Not exactly; but it amounts to the same thing, except that my father is satisfied with my leaving."

"Tell me all about it."

"Well, it was this way. After you took Bell away the doctor was fearfully cross. He was ashamed to think we boys had seen his downfall, and as you were not there he vented his anger on us. There were never so many boys flogged in the same length of time before."

"Did you receive the money Mr. Locke and myself sent you?"

"Yes, and it got me into trouble. You see, the doctor heard of it, and it set him to thinking. Finally he found out, by the help of that sneaking son of his, that I had encouraged Bell to run away. He was almost beside himself with anger, and made up his mind to do what he had never done before; that is, give me a flogging."

"I hope he didn't do it," said Guy, hastily.

"Listen, and I will tell you all about it. He summoned me before the whole school, and made a short speech. 'James Rawdon,' he said, 'I have

spared you heretofore on account of your excellent father, but I find that you aided and abetted your schoolmate Bell to run away in defiance of my rightful authority. Did you, or did you not?"

" 'I did,' I answered. 'The boy was so brutally treated that he had good reason to run away.'

" 'I never heard such insolence!' roared the doctor, his eyes blazing. 'Take off your jacket!'

" 'Thank you, sir,' I replied, 'I'd rather keep it on.'

"He lost all control of himself then, and sprang for me with the whip. My father had told me never to submit to a flogging, so I grabbed for the whip, and we had a struggle for it.

"I managed to break his spectacles, and convinced him that I was pretty strong for a boy. But what frightened him most was this—I pulled out a toy pistol from my pocket, and the doctor became pale as a sheet.

" 'Put that down, sir!' he cried. 'I will dispose of your case to-morrow!'

"That was all I wanted. That very evening I walked to the station and took the cars for London, buying my ticket with the money you sent me. When I told my father what led me to leave the school he told me I had done right, and he sent

the doctor a letter which he won't be very glad to read."

"Dr. Musgrave seems to be a very unwise man," said Guy.

"All the boys are getting dissatisfied," rejoined Rawdon. "I know four who have written to their fathers to take them away. Dr. Musgrave will soon find himself deserted."

On this point we will anticipate matters a little by saying that Rawdon's statement proved prophetic. Dr. Musgrave's temper was so aggravated by what had occurred that he increased his severity to such an extent as to induce a rebellion of the pupils.

The directors were finally obliged to take cognizance of the complaints made by parents, and the result was that Dr. Musgrave was removed from the post of head master. He found it impossible to get another position, and was compelled to live, or attempt to live, on the income of a small sum which he had been able to accumulate in his twenty years' service.

His successor was a man of high scholarship and enlightened views, who had assisted Dr. Arnold at Rugby School.

Under his charge the school regained its lost popularity. For his humiliation Dr. Musgrave

had only himself to thank, but it is doubtful if he fully realized it.

A problem now presented itself to Guy, in reference to his ward. What should he do with him?

As the boy's education was incomplete, it seemed desirable that it should be continued. Moreover, in his future plans Guy felt that Vivian's company would hamper him, besides increasing his responsibility.

Jim Rawdon came to his rescue.

One morning he called at the hotel where Guy was living, and said: "Why can't you let Bell go to school with me?"

"Where are you going?" asked Guy.

"My father will send me to a clergyman who takes but six scholars, and who is highly recommended. He has two vacancies, so there is room for Bell and myself."

"Please give me the clergyman's name, and I will look the matter up."

Rawdon did so.

Guy heard, upon inquiry, such good accounts of the teacher recommended that he decided to send Vivian to him, especially as he found that his young ward was in favor of the plan.

This relieved him, and left him ready to carry

out any instructions he might receive from his employer in Bombay.

It was not long before these instructions came. Going one morning to the banking house, he found a letter from Mr. Saunders.

A part of it ran thus:

I presume you have visited Milton School, and inquired into the charges brought by my ward Vivian Bell against the head master. If the boy is really ill treated, have no hesitation in removing him. I am not willing that my old friend's son should be cruelly used. Of my own knowledge I know nothing of Dr. Musgrave, but you will have no difficulty in forming a correct judgment as to his character and methods.

I leave it to your discretion to select another school for Vivian, unless the boy's health should require a journey, in which case you may take him with you to America.

This leads me to say that certain matters which I will detail to you in a note of instruction, I wish to have you discuss with my New York agent, Gilbert Frazer, whose address you have. This will make it necessary for you to make a brief visit to New York.

I now come to the matter of the pirates' treas-

ure, which, according to the papers you showed me, is probably concealed on one of the Agalegas Islands. When you first mentioned the matter to me I thought little of it. So many stories are extant about buried treasure, that I was disposed to think this might be entitled to little consideration. But further reflections have led me to think that the treasure may really have an existence.

I therefore authorize you to communicate with your old acquaintance, Captain Grover, of the Osprey, with a view to engaging his services on his next trip, in a search for the island. That nothing may interfere with this object, he may report to my agent, Mr. Frazer, who will provide him with a cargo consigned to me. The search for the island will occasion delay, but of this I shall not complain, though another party undoubtedly would.

I send you a letter of credit addressed to Mr. Frazer, who will provide you with such funds as you need.

Yours truly,
JOHN SAUNDERS.

A memorandum of instructions accompanied this letter.

CHAPTER XVII

HOW THINGS WENT ON IN BAYPORT

GUY was pleased with the prospect of a return to America, especially as it was but for a short time. He would not have liked to feel that his journeyings were over, and he was to go back there permanently.

He had been some months away from his home in Bayport, and during this time he had not heard anything from his father or the friends he left behind.

He felt that he had been remarkably successful. He left Bayport a raw boy, and now, after six months, he represented a wealthy merchant in Bombay, was worth a considerable sum in money, and had a prospect of continued employment at a good salary.

He had not thought much of it till now, but as the day of his sailing for New York approached he began to be anxious about his father's health. He also troubled himself lest rumors might have

come to him about disaffection in the parish, and the schemes of Deacon Crane to oust him from the position he had so long and so honorably held, and to put in his place a younger man.

While Guy is on the Atlantic, speeding for home on the good steamer Etruria, we will precede him and let the reader know how matters are going on in Bayport.

Deacon Crane had gathered at his house three or four members of the church one Thursday evening, and was seeking to bring them over to his views on parish matters.

"I tell you what, Brother Ainsworth," said he, addressing the village storekeeper, "it's time we had a change in the minister. Mr. Fenwick is behind the times. He isn't a hustler. Why, the parish is at a standstill. There are not more members than there were five years ago."

"That may be, Deacon Crane, but Bayport itself has been at a standstill. I don't believe the population has increased twenty-five in those five years."

"Mebbe not, mebbe not; but the parson is feeding us on husks instead of rich spiritual food."

"I think you are prejudiced, Deacon Crane," said Jackson Butler, a farmer, and one of the parish committee. "Mr. Fenwick is an able man, and none of the ministers he exchanges with gives us a

better sermon than he. One of my friends from New Bedford attended church with me last Sunday, and expressed himself as highly edified with our minister's sermon."

"I apprehend," said the deacon, "that it is more important that he should please the members of his own flock than the stray sheep who attend church occasionally from other folds."

"Still the verdict of an intelligent outsider carries weight."

"I tell you I want a change," said the deacon, with emphasis. "I want some bright, young man that'll make a stir."

"Do you think there are many that feel that way, deacon?"

"Not a doubt of it."

"Who, for instance?"

"Well," said the deacon, after a pause, "Mr. Bucklin, for instance."

"Bucklin seldom goes to church, and last year he contributed but five dollars toward the minister's salary."

"Exactly so. Get a young man, and Bucklin would attend regularly, and pay a larger sum toward the church expenses."

"He might double his subscription, but that would not amount to much," said Mr. Ainsworth.

"Now I pay fifty dollars, and I think I have a larger claim to consideration than Silas Bucklin."

"To be sure, to be sure! But we want to put aside our own preferences and consult for the general good."

"Do you do that, Deacon Crane?" asked Mr. Ainsworth, pointedly.

"Yes, sir! yes, sir!"

"You are prejudiced against the minister."

"No, sir; I am only considering what will be for the good of the parish."

"You object, then, to the minister's sermons? Is that all?"

"No, Brother Ainsworth. I object to Mr. Fenwick as a family man."

"That's something new. What is your objection?"

"Well, you see, he's let his son Guy go off on a wildgoose chase to the other end of the world. Instead of keeping him at home to complete his education, or go into a store, he's let him sail to India with Captain Grover."

"That reminds me," said Enoch Slade, the village carpenter. "Captain Grover arrived home yesterday."

"Then where is Guy Fenwick? Nothing has been seen of him in the village."

"He didn't come home with the captain."

"Didn't come home?" repeated Deacon Crane, in amazement. "Where is he?"

"He stayed in Bombay. I believe he got something to do there."

"Well, that beats all I ever heard," said the deacon, severely. "It shows just what sort of a bringing up the boy has had. The minister ought to have known better than to have let him leave home. Guy was always self-willed. My son Noah never liked him."

This didn't impress the deacon's visitors as much as he anticipated, for Noah Crane was by no means an object of admiration in the village. He was generally considered sly and mean, while Guy was a universal favorite.

"I always liked Guy, myself," said Mr. Ainsworth. "He is a good scholar and a good boy. I do hope he will come out all right."

"It ain't hardly to be expected, Brother Ainsworth. The boy has always had his own way. You wouldn't catch me letting my Noah go off to the other end of the world."

"What did Captain Grover think of Guy remaining behind?" asked Mr. Ainsworth.

"He thought it was a good plan. Guy had a

position with a leading English merchant in that city."

"You'll see him coming home before the mast as a common sailor, mark my words," said the deacon. "As I was saying, the minister ought to set a good example to his people in the way of family discipline; but you see what he's done. Suppose we all followed his example?"

"I think Guy will come out all right," observed Enoch Slade.

"I don't."

"What would you have done with him?"

"I'd have put him into a store, or had him learn a trade; that's what I would have done."

"Mr. Fenwick was anxious to have him go to college," suggested Enoch Slade.

"What was the objection?"

"He couldn't afford it. You know Mr. Fenwick's salary is only a thousand dollars a year, and he has an aged aunt whom he helps. So it was quite impossible for him to afford the expense."

"All the more reason for keeping Guy at home and setting him to work. Now if I chose to send Noah to college, I could afford it," added the deacon, proudly.

"Why don't you do it, then?" asked Mr. Ainsworth.

"Noah doesn't care to go. He wants to be a business man."

"I wouldn't give him a place in my store," thought Ainsworth, "if he would work for nothing."

Of course he didn't say this.

On the whole, Deacon Crane didn't find as much sympathy as he expected in his opposition to the minister, but he succeeded in converting half a dozen heads of families to his views. They were not persons of much importance, but, instigated by the deacon, they talked a good deal, and managed to convey the impression that there was really considerable dissatisfaction with Mr. Fenwick.

Finally, Deacon Crane thought the time had come to call upon the minister, and let him know how matters stood, or rather how he wished matters to stand.

So one evening he took his cane, and made his way to the parsonage.

Mr. Fenwick was at work upon his sermon for the coming Sunday, but he laid down his pen and greeted the deacon cordially.

"I hear that your son hasn't come home on the Osprey, Brother Fenwick," the deacon began.

"No. It's a disappointment to me. I have missed him sadly.

"It seems to me it was a very risky thing to let him go off so far."

"He was very anxious to go, and I thought it might be an education to him. I would like, myself, to see more of the great world."

"Of course that's one way to look at it, but there ain't many boys that can be trusted so far away. I was amazed at his not coming home. What does the captain say?"

"He says that Guy made a good friend, and he is earning enough to pay his expenses."

"Then you approve of his staying?"

"I hardly know what to think. Guy is a good boy, and I think he can be trusted."

Deacon Crane coughed.

A cough is very significant sometimes. The deacon's cough indicated incredulity of a very decided character.

"Mebbe, mebbe," he said; "but that isn't the way I would have managed with my boy."

"What would have been your course?" asked Mr. Fenwick, mildly.

"I would have set Guy to work. He is old enough to be a help to you."

"He is earning his living."

"True, if he keeps his place. Suppose he gets discharged?"

"The captain says that is not likely."

"Mebbe, mebbe; but I didn't come here to discuss your son, parson. I have a weightier matter to speak of."

"Go on, Brother Crane, I am ready to listen to you."

CHAPTER XVIII

WILY DEACON CRANE

"It's a delicate matter," said Deacon Crane, coughing slightly. "I'd rather some other brother would have taken it off my hands, but duty is duty, and it isn't right to shirk it."

"True, Brother Crane," said the minister, but he looked puzzled. He had no idea what the deacon was driving at.

"Do you think, parson, the parish is progressin' as it should? Do you think the people are as much interested in religion as they'd ought to be?"

"Is there any parish of which that can be said, Brother Crane?"

"Well, perhaps not; but it seems to me there's a good deal of spiritooal indifference in the church to-day."

"More than there used to be?"

"That's the point I am comin' to. To my mind the congregation is gettin' less and less spiritooally-minded."

"I am very sorry if this is the case. I had not

noticed it. The congregations keep up very well, and the people are attentive to the services."

"Mebbe, mebbe; they'd appear to be so out of respect for you, parson; but as I move about the village, of course I hear what's said."

"Admitting that things are as you say, what remedy do you suggest?"

"That's the p'int! That's the p'int I was comin' at; but I don't hardly like to answer that question."

"Why not?" asked the minister, innocently.

"Because it might hurt your feelin's, parson."

"I will not allow my feelings to stand in the way, so be kind enough to answer the question frankly and candidly."

"Then, if I must say it," replied the deacon, watching under his shaggy eyebrows to see what effect his words would have upon Mr. Fenwick, "if I must say it, some of the people are sayin' it might be well for the parish to have a younger minister!"

Mr. Fenwick started as if he had been struck. He was utterly unprepared for this communication. He had lived among his people for twenty years, and no thought of separation had come to him.

He turned pale, and endeavored to stifle his emotion.

"I—I was not prepared for this, Deacon Crane," he said. "Are the people really getting tired of me?" he added, with a tremor in his voice.

"Of course there are some of us that stand by you, parson; for instance, myself and Mrs. Crane. But I regret to say that some of the younger people are gettin' uneasy, and think that a change might be for the benefit of the parish."

"Will you name to me some of the disaffected ones, Brother Crane?"

"No, I'd rather not. You see, they all respect you. You see, you're gettin' into years, parson."

"I am fifty-one."

"True, that isn't very old. I'm a year or two older myself." (The deacon was fifty-nine.) "But then I am not a preacher. People don't seem to consider age an objection in a deacon. If they did, I hope I should be willin' to sacrifice myself on the altar of dooty."

Mr. Fenwick rose from his chair and began to pace up and down the study. He was very much agitated, and heart-sore at the thought that the people who were so near to him should wish him to go.

"How long have you seen signs of disaffection, Deacon Crane?" he asked, pausing in his walk.

"Well, for about two years, I reckon, Mr. Fenwick."

"And yet the people seem to come to church in as large numbers as usual."

"It is their sense of dooty, parson. They feel that they ought to come."

"That may be. It is certainly very commendable. I only mention it to let you understand why I have not noticed this feeling."

"Of course, I needn't say, parson, that I am very sorry to be the one chosen to tell you how matters stand. You see, there was a meetin' of a few of your parishioners at my house last night, and we talked the matter over, and it was thought best that I should give you a hint."

"May I ask who were at your house, Deacon Crane?"

"Well, I don't think I ought to tell. Some of them might be unwilling."

"I don't see why."

"They might think you would be offended."

"I should have no right to be offended. I might feel grieved. Indeed I do. But, of course, my first thought must be of the parish, and what is good for it."

"I knew you would feel that way, Brother Fen-

wick. We all know what a conscientious man you are."

"I hope so," faltered the minister. "You think that I ought to send in my resignation?"

"Of course, parson, you will be able to preach to good acceptance in some other parish. All people don't have the same taste."

"It would be hard for me to settle down among strangers."

"Just at first it would; but after a while it would put new life into you. We all of us need a change, ministers as well as other people."

"I will think over what you say, Deacon Crane. It has come as a surprise to me."

"To be sure, to be sure! There is only one thing now I want to say," and the deacon cleared his throat with portentous significance.

"And what is that other thing you have to say, deacon?" asked Mr. Fenwick.

"You know I hold a mortgage of five hundred dollars on your house?"

"Yes."

"I was thinkin' of callin' it in; but if you should be goin' to another place, I wouldn't mind buyin' it if we could agree upon terms."

"I don't feel like discussing that question now, deacon."

"All right. There's plenty of time."

Deacon Crane rose to go. As he left the house a complacent smile overspread his face. He felt that he had broached the subject successfully, and deceived the minister as to the extent of the opposition to him.

Besides, and this was no unimportant consideration, he saw that there would be a chance, in all probability, of buying the minister's modest house at a bargain, and so making a tidy little profit for himself.

Half an hour later, Mr. Ainsworth entered the presence of the minister. He had seen Deacon Crane leaving the parsonage, and guessed his object in calling.

Lest the deacon should have misrepresented matters, he wished to have a little conference with Mr. Fenwick himself.

"Mr. Fenwick," he said, as he entered the study, "you look sober."

"Yes, Brother Ainsworth, my heart is heavy."

"Deacon Crane has called upon you?"

"Yes. He grieved me very much by telling me that the people wanted a change."

"Which means that *he* wants a change."

"He assured me that he and Mrs. Crane stood

by me. He said it was the younger people who were getting uneasy."

"Mr. Fenwick, Deacon Crane has for months been trying to get up an opposition to you."

"Can this be so?"

"Yes. He has not met with very good success. I don't think there are more than half a dozen persons besides himself that want a change, and those are members by no means prominent."

"But why should he be so desirous of having me leave?"

"Because there is a cousin of his wife, now out of a charge, whom he hopes to get here in your place. That is the true explanation. He has deceived you as to the state of feeling in the parish."

"Brother Ainsworth, you have relieved my mind and lifted from it a heavy burden. The deacon gave me to understand the feeling was general."

"Moreover," continued Mr. Ainsworth, "he wants to get hold of your house and let it to his cousin, if he can manage to get him installed as your successor."

"Then you don't think I ought to resign?"

"Certainly not. We don't propose to have the deacon run the parish."

Two days afterward Deacon Crane called again.

"Well, Brother Fenwick," he said, "have you decided to resign?"

"No, Deacon Crane, not yet. Brother Ainsworth tells me that the great majority of the people favor my remaining."

"He is in error," said the deacon, tartly. "You are making a great mistake. And I want to say that I shall have to foreclose that mortgage. I want the money this day week."

"I doubt if I can obtain it so soon," said the minister, troubled.

"Then I will buy the place."

"I prefer not to sell. I will try to secure the money."

Mr. Fenwick went about among those of his friends who he thought might be able to accommodate him with a loan, but there was a stringency in the money market, and no one seemed able to oblige him.

He returned, despondent, from his search, when, as he entered the house, he found a letter awaiting him.

It ran thus:

DEAR FATHER:

I have just arrived in New York on the Etruria.
I hope to reach Bayport to-morrow. GUY.

CHAPTER XIX

PREPARING TO RECEIVE GUY

THOUGH he was puzzled by Guy's letter, Mr. Fenwick was overjoyed at the thought of seeing his son again.

Why he should have arrived at New York on the *Etruria*, when he had been left by Captain Grover in Bombay, he could not understand.

"Probably Guy was too young for his position," he thought, "and his employer has paid his expenses home. Never mind; he can find something to do here. It seems a long, long time since I have seen my dear boy."

For the time he forgot the fact that he had no money with which to meet the mortgage; but it was brought back to his recollection when, later in the day, he met Deacon Crane in the village.

"Well, parson," began the deacon, abruptly, "I hope you haven't forgotten that the mortgage falls due day after to-morrow. Have you secured the money to pay it?"

"No, Deacon Crane. Money seems very hard to borrow just now."

"I am aware of that. You will find it best to sell to me."

"What do you offer?"

"A thousand dollars over and above the face of the mortgage."

"But," said the minister, dismayed, "that would make the place worth only fifteen hundred dollars!"

"Fifteen hundred dollars is a great deal of money."

"Why, I paid two thousand!"

"Mebbe, mebbe; but property depreciates in the course of years."

"Certainly the land has not depreciated, and the house is in good repair."

"Well, money is tight. You know that yourself, for you have found it hard to borrow."

"Can't you let matters run on for a year longer? By that time I may be able to realize a large sum for the property."

Deacon Crane's thin lips tightened, and his eyes looked crafty and forbidding.

"What you ask is unreasonable, Brother Fenwick," he said.

The minister looked despondent.

"If I sell the house," he said, "I don't know where I can find another."

"You can board," suggested the deacon.

"I should not like it. I have been accustomed to have a home of my own. Besides—I didn't think to tell you—I am expecting Guy home."

Deacon Crane opened his eyes wide.

"Why, I thought he was in Bombay, earning his living. Why did he leave there?"

"I don't know. I got a letter this morning, saying that he had reached New York on the steamer Etruria."

Deacon Crane's puckered and wrinkled face looked jubilant. It might have been thought that he was pleased at the prospect of seeing Guy back; but this would have been a mistake.

"I am not surprised," he said, dryly.

"I am. I did not dream of such a thing."

"Of course, it's plain enough. Guy didn't suit his employer, and he has been discharged."

"I hope it isn't that. But even that is better than his being sick."

"I told you, parson, that it was very unwise to let so young a boy go off to the other end of the world. I know it wasn't your fault, his staying behind in Bombay, but I should think a sensible man like Captain Grover would have advised against it."

"I shall soon know what brings Guy back. I only mentioned it to explain that I should need a home for him as well as myself. It makes me all the more anxious to keep the house."

"I am sure I have no objection if you can pay off the mortgage."

"You couldn't extend it for another year?"

"No, I couldn't."

"Then perhaps you will take me as your tenant?"

"I don't think I could do that, either. I have other views."

"I've got some news for you, Noah," said Deacon Crane, when he entered his own house.

"What is it, father?"

"Guy Fenwick is coming back."

"When?" asked Noah, eagerly.

"His father's had a letter from New York, sayin' that he's just arrived by the Etruria."

"Why, the Etruria comes from Liverpool, not from Bombay!"

"I know that. He must have come by way of England."

"Ho! ho! Why, I thought he'd got a place in Bombay?"

"He's probably been discharged and sent home."

"I'm glad of it!"

"I suppose you'll be glad to have his company again?" said the deacon, slyly, for he knew just how his son felt toward Guy.

"No, it isn't that; but I'm glad he's come home in disgrace. That boy was always puttin' on airs, though his father was only a poor minister, and hadn't half as much money as you."

"No; nor one-fifth," said the deacon, complacently. "I'll tell you a secret, Noah. I've got a mortgage on the minister's house."

"I know that already."

"But you didn't know that I should probably have to foreclose the mortgage, and take the place. Of course, I shall get it cheap."

"What are you going to do with it?"

"Perhaps I shall keep it till you are married, Noah, and give it to you to live in," said his father, playfully.

"Then Guy won't have any home to go to?"

"That's about it."

"I wouldn't be in his shoes. He's lost his place, and now he will lose his home, too."

"We mustn't rejoice over his misfortune," said the deacon, with the air of a Pecksniff. "We should always feel sorry for the bad luck of our fellow men."

"If you are, father, why do you foreclose the mortgage?"

"That's business, Noah. We sometimes have to do in the way of business what we do not like to do. By the way, don't mention to anyone what I intend to do."

"No, I won't. But why doesn't the minister pay off the mortgage?"

"For the very good reason that he cannot borrow the money."

"I thought perhaps Mr. Ainsworth would lend him. He seems to be a great friend of the minister."

"It's all Ainsworth can do to get the money to pay his own bills. The only man in the village that's got any spare cash is——"

"Well, who?"

"Deacon Crane," answered Noah's father, with a wintry smile; "and he isn't lendin'."

"Ho! ho!" laughed Noah. "When is Guy Fenwick expected back?"

"I shouldn't wonder if he'd be here this afternoon, though the minister didn't say. I don't suppose there's anything to keep him in New York."

"That is, if he's got money enough to get home. It would be a joke if he had to walk."

"I guess he'll have money enough to get home,

but I reckon it'll be a good while before he gets a chance to go away again."

"I'll be on the lookout for him," said Noah. "I want to see how he looks, and what he'll say when he finds his father is going to lose the house."

Mr. Fenwick had occasion to visit the village store during the day. Sometimes he went there without any errand, for he was always cordially received by Mr. Ainsworth.

As he entered, the storekeeper looked up.

"What is this I hear about Guy returning, Mr. Fenwick?" he asked.

"I received a letter this morning stating that he had just reached New York by the steamer Etruria."

"You didn't expect him, did you?"

"No. I supposed that he was still at Bombay."

"Your special friend, Deacon Crane, seems to be pleased to think he is coming back."

"He thinks Guy has been discharged by the merchant who employed him."

"Of course, it is possible that he did not give satisfaction."

"I don't know how that may be, but I shall be glad to have my boy at home again."

"Have you formed any views for him?"

"I suppose it will be well to let him go into some store or counting-room. He doesn't seem to care to go to college."

"If you see fit to let him enter my store, Mr. Fenwick, I shall be glad to receive him. I always liked Guy, and I consider him a smart boy."

"Thank you, Mr. Ainsworth. You are always kind to me and mine. I can't decide till I have seen Guy, but I think it quite possible that we shall accept your offer."

This was not the only opening for Guy.

Deacon Crane offered to give him work on his farm.

"I feel for your disappointment about the boy, parson," he said, "and I think I can set him to work on my place. Of course, I can't pay him much."

"Thank you, Deacon Crane. I will see what Guy thinks about your offer."

Mr. Fenwick knew, though he did not say so, that nothing would induce Guy to enter the deacon's service.

CHAPTER XX

GUY REACHES BAYPORT

GUY did not delay long in New York. He called upon Gilbert Frazer, the American agent of his employer, and attended to the business that had been intrusted to him.

Mr. Frazer, a canny Scotchman, somewhat over fifty, was amazed that Mr. Saunders had so far trusted "a mere boy"; but in his conversation with Guy he found that "the mere boy" was quick and intelligent, and seemed thoroughly to comprehend the business on which he was employed.

"You are an extraordinary boy," he said, raising his glasses, and peering at Guy from under the rims. "How old are you?"

"Seventeen, sir."

"You seem to have the brains of a man of twenty-five."

"Thank you, sir. I suppose I may consider that a compliment?"

"Surely. When will you call again? I shall need to have some further words with you."

"I wish to visit my father, whom I have not seen for six months or more, but I will return to the city in four days."

"Where does your father live?"

"In Bayport, Massachusetts."

"Very good. I will expect you in four days. There will be no harm in waiting that length of time."

"Now," said Guy to himself, joyfully, "I shall soon be at home."

He engaged passage by the steamer Pilgrim of the Fall River Line, and started that night.

He found himself the next morning in New Bedford. Here he took a stage for Bayport.

His heart beat with excitement when he reached the borders of his native village. He realized the charms of home.

He had traveled many thousand miles by land and sea, he had seen London and Bombay, but neither of these cities seemed so attractive to him as the obscure town on the Massachusetts coast where he had passed his boyhood days.

The first person whom he saw when he descended from the stage was Noah Crane.

In fact, Noah had managed to be around when the stage arrived, in the hope of meeting Guy.

Guy was so pleased to see a familiar face that

he forgot the old animosity between himself and the deacon's son, and exclaimed, gladly: "How are you, Noah? It seems good to see an old friend!"

"So you've got back?" said Noah, coolly.

"Yes, I've got back."

"I thought you'd be back before long."

Then it dawned upon Guy that Noah looked upon him as a failure, and it amused him.

"Of course I would come back, since my father lives here. Is he well?"

"Oh, yes, he's well—in health."

"Isn't he well in other respects?"

"Well, you see, some of the people want a younger minister. I don't know how it will turn out."

"I suppose your father is one who favors a change?"

"Well, he seems to think it might be better for the parish."

Guy smiled. The suggestion did not trouble him as it might have done six months before.

"Besides," continued Noah, "he may lose his house."

This was certainly news.

"I don't understand you," said Guy. "The house belongs to him."

"Yes, but there's a mortgage on it."

"Well?"

"Father holds the mortgage, and as your father can't pay it, of course he'll have to give it up."

"Do you remember how large the mortgage is, Noah?"

"Five hundred dollars."

"That isn't much. He ought to be able to borrow that small sum."

"Seems to me you have pretty large ideas. It'll be a long time before you'll be able to earn five hundred dollars."

"Well, perhaps so," said Guy, smiling.

"Now you've come back to live on your father, it'll be harder still for him."

"Perhaps I shall get work," answered Guy, smiling again.

"Yes; you'll have to earn something. My father says he will hire you to work on our farm."

"That's very kind of him."

"He does it on account of your father. He feels for him, considering he has been so much disappointed in you."

"I didn't expect so much kindness from the deacon and you. I'll think over this offer, if he decides to make it. But I can't stop talking here

any longer. I know father will be anxious to see me."

"Guy is a queer boy," thought Noah. "When I told him about his father's troubles he only smiled as if he didn't care. I'd like to take as long a journey as he has, but I shouldn't like to return home a pauper."

"Noah is as kind and amiable as ever," thought Guy. "Evidently he thinks I am a bad failure. I wonder how he will feel when he learns how fortunate I have been."

In a few minutes he found himself entering the yard of the parsonage.

Guy was touched by his father's evident delight. He began to understand how near he was to his heart.

"Welcome home, Guy!" he said. "I have had my cares and anxieties, but this pays me for all!"

"Thank you, father. It seems good to be at home again."

"And you have been in good health all the time, Guy?"

"Never better, father."

"You must be hungry, my son. Come in, and you shall try some of Rachel's home cooking."

"Indeed, father, I can do it justice. Were you surprised to receive my letter?"

"Yes, Guy. I thought you were thousands of miles away. How did you like your employer, Mr. Saunders?"

The father asked this doubtfully, not knowing on what terms his son had left the merchant.

"He is an excellent man, and a good friend, father."

"Then how did it happen that he discharged you, Guy?" asked the minister.

"Who told you he discharged me?"

"I judged so on account of your return home."

"I am still in his employ, father. I went to England first, and have now come to America as his agent, and on his business. And you actually thought I was discharged?"

"Yes, Guy; and Deacon Crane is of the same opinion."

"I know that," said Guy, with a laugh. "I met Noah on getting off the stage. I really believe he went to meet me."

"I did not know you were friends."

"We are not. He wanted to triumph over me on account of my supposed discharge. He offered me a place on his father's farm."

"And Mr. Ainsworth is ready to give you a position in his store."

"Mr. Ainsworth is a friend. I would not mind

working for him if there was any need of it; but nothing would induce me to work for the deacon."

"But how can you be in the employ of Mr. Saunders while you are here?"

"I am under pay all the time, father. I cannot be with you long. I must be in New York in four days, to attend to some business there, and soon after shall be obliged to start again on a long journey."

"It seems strange, Guy, to think of you as in the employ of a man thousands of miles away. Are your prospects good?"

"Excellent, father. And now tell me about yourself. Has Deacon Crane been making trouble for you in the parish?"

"Yes, Guy. He tried to stir up opposition to me in favor of a younger man, but he found very few to join him. My good parishioners stood by me."

"Good for them! As for the deacon, he is a mean, malicious, double-faced man!"

"We must not speak ill of others, Guy."

"He deserves it, if anyone does! But you spoke of anxieties. To what do you refer?"

"To a very great one, Guy. You did not perhaps know that this house was mortgaged?"

"Yes; Noah kindly informed me of it when we met this morning."

"It is his father, Deacon Crane, who holds the mortgage."

"What is the sum?"

"Five hundred dollars."

"That is not a large sum."

"No; but the deacon wants it. He will not consent to extend it."

"Can you borrow it in the village?"

"No, Guy. Times are hard. No one has any extra money. My good friend Ainsworth would lend it to me if he had it, but at present he can't raise it."

"Then what will follow?"

"The place will be sold to satisfy the claim. Deacon Crane has offered a thousand dollars over and above the mortgage."

"Why, that is robbery!" said Guy, indignantly.

"True, Guy, but it can't be helped. The deacon will secure the house, and I shall be turned out!"

"No, you won't, father!"

"What do you mean, Guy?"

"When does the mortgage fall due?"

"To-morrow."

"Very well; don't borrow any trouble, father. It shall be paid."

"But how? I don't understand."

"I have more than enough money to meet it."

"But, Guy, it would not be right to use your employer's money!"

"There is no need of that. I have more than enough money of my own."

CHAPTER XXI

DEACON CRANE IS PERPLEXED

MR. FENWICK was sitting at his desk when Deacon Crane called. The deacon expected to find him nervous and agitated, and was surprised to note that he was as calm and placid as usual.

"Take a seat, Deacon Crane," said the minister.

The deacon seated himself in a rocking-chair and began to rock. It was his custom when he was excited.

"I hear, Mr. Fenwick, that your son Guy has got home," he began.

"Yes," answered Mr. Fenwick, with a smile of satisfaction. "Guy has got back."

"Rather unexpected, wasn't it?"

"Yes, unexpected, but very welcome. It has brightened me up a good deal."

"Has it? I thought perhaps you might have been disappointed."

"Disappointed to see Guy? Oh, no! no!"

"You know what I mean," returned the deacon, with some asperity.

"I don't think I do."

"I mean, of course, that it can't be pleasant to have your son thrown on your hands when you thought he was earnin' his livin'."

"I think I must ask you to explain yourself."

"If you wasn't a minister, I might say that you seem a little dense," said the deacon, impatiently. "However, I feel for you. You can't afford to have a big boy eatin' you out of house and home. I can find work for him on my farm, though, of course, I shouldn't feel justified in payin' much."

"You are considerate, deacon," said Mr. Fenwick, with a slight smile, "and perhaps I have misled you. Guy is not out of employment."

"No?" said the deacon, opening his eyes in surprise. "Do you mean to say that he has a position?"

"He is in the employ of Mr. Saunders of Bombay."

"How can that be?"

"He was sent to New York on business by his employer, and took the opportunity of visiting me."

"This don't seem a very likely story," said the deacon, in a tone of disappointment. "Are you sure he isn't deceivin' you?"

"I am quite sure," answered Mr. Fenwick, with dignity. "Does your son ever deceive you?"

"That isn't neither here nor there. If he told me such a story as Guy has told you I would punish him."

"Guy doesn't deceive me," said the minister, quietly.

He was annoyed with the deacon for his incredulity, but he understood Mr. Crane's suspicious nature, also his dislike for Guy, and he was not surprised.

"However," continued the deacon, "that isn't what I came over for. I hope you've considered the matter, and are resigned to my foreclosin' the mortgage."

"I do not propose to allow the mortgage to be foreclosed."

The deacon was surprised and angry. He felt that Mr. Fenwick was trifling with him.

"I apprehend," he said, "that it isn't what you allow, Mr. Minister, but what I choose to do."

"You are mistaken, Deacon Crane."

"How are you goin' to stop me foreclosin'?"

"By paying the mortgage."

"Have you got the money?" asked the deacon, his jaw dropping.

"Yes."

"Who lent it to you? Was it Mr. Ainsworth?"

"I don't think, Deacon Crane, that that is a question which you have any right to ask."

"Oh, well, if you don't want to tell," said the deacon, in a tone of disappointment.

"I don't know that I have any objection to tell you, though, as I said, it is not a question which you have a right to ask. Guy lent it to me."

"Guy lent it to you?" repeated the deacon, in an amazement which was almost ludicrous.

"Yes."

"Mr. Fenwick," said the deacon, severely, "I thought you'd be above takin' from Guy his employer's money."

"I think, Deacon Crane, that you are guilty of great impertinence in hinting such a thing!"

"This to me?" ejaculated the deacon, wrathfully.

"Yes, sir. You are speaking in a way I shall not permit. We will, if you please, proceed at once to business."

Mr. Fenwick displayed such unusual spirit that Deacon Crane was electrified.

"The minister's gettin' on his high horse," he said to himself. "It's a mystery to me where Guy got so much money. I won't rest till I find out."

The money was paid, and Mr. Fenwick breathed

a sigh of relief when he realized that his little property was at last free from incumbrance.

Deacon Crane left the house in a state of bewilderment even exceeding his disappointment. How on earth Guy could have come to his father's assistance he could not understand.

He determined to question the minister's son at the first opportunity.

He had not long to wait.

He had walked but two hundred yards when he met Guy sauntering along with a pleasant smile on his face.

"Here, you, Guy!" he called out, unceremoniously. "Your father tells me you have lent him five hundred dollars."

"I hope you don't doubt my father's word," said Guy, amused by the deacon's evident perplexity.

"I don't doubt it, for I've got the money in my wallet. The question is, where did you get it?"

"Yes, that is the question."

"What have you got to say for yourself?" demanded the deacon, sharply.

"Only that I was very glad to oblige my dear father."

"I don't mean that. Where did you get the money?"

"From my employer."

"Aha! That's what I thought. Don't you know you're likely to be arrested for makin' such poor use of your employer's money?"

"But you're mistaken, Deacon Crane. It was not my employer's money."

"Just now you said it was."

"No, I didn't. I said I got it from my employer. The money was mine."

"Do you mean to say he gave it to you?"

"Yes, but not as a gift. I was and am still in his employ."

"And I s'pose he gives you five or six dollars a week. You can't save any five hundred dollars out of that."

"That's true, Deacon Crane. You are a good mathematician. He pays me very handsomely."

"How old be you?"

"Seventeen."

"All that I can say is that he must be a fool to pay a big salary to a boy like you, and you are very foolish to give up all the money you have to your father."

"I have a little money left," said Guy, smiling.

"If, now, you were in a tight place, I might be able to lend you a hundred dollars."

"I am never in a tight place," returned the deacon, proudly, "but I think it would be wise and

prudent for you to put the money in my hands for safe keeping. I'll be willin' to pay you three per cent."

"Thank you, Deacon Crane, but I can do better than that."

"You seem to be a very reckless boy, Guy Fenwick. Yon don't seem to have no judgment. You won't keep that money long."

"I am afraid, Deacon Crane, you haven't much confidence in me."

"No, I haven't. Your father ain't practical, and you take after him."

Guy smiled and passed on.

During the afternoon he fell in with Noah Crane, who had heard from his father the astonishing news about Guy's prosperity. It influenced that young man to seek an intimacy with his fortunate schoolfellow.

"I say, Guy," he began, "is it true that you've got a lot of money? Pop tells me you've been lending your father five hundred dollars."

"That is true."

"And you offered to lend pop one hundred dollars."

"But he declined."

"It'll be all the same if you lend it to me," said Noah, eagerly.

"What do you want to do with it?"

"I want to buy a bicycle. I can get a safety, second-hand, for seventy-five dollars."

"How could you pay me back?"

"I guess I can get the money out of father next year. Do now, that's a good fellow."

"If you can get for me your father's note of hand for the money and interest, say on a year's time, I might consent to do it."

"But he won't give it to me."

"Then I can't lend you the money."

Noah pleaded, but in vain.

Five minutes later Guy had a pleasant surprise. Coming up the road from the station he met Captain Grover of the Osprey.

CHAPTER XXII

THE CAPTAIN OF THE OSPREY

"GUY, my son!" said Captain Grover, his face lighting up with unmistakable joy. "It does me good to see you again. Why, you're quite two inches taller than when we parted at Bombay."

"Yes, captain; I think I have grown," returned Guy, complacently. "When did you get back?"

"Only last week. You are here almost as soon as I. Have you got through working for Mr. Saunders?"

"Oh, no. I am still in his employ. I went to England to attend to some business for him, and I am now in America on the same errand."

"And does he make it worth your while?"

"Yes," answered Guy, smiling. "I won't go into particulars. I haven't done that even with my father. I will tell you, however, that since I have been home I have paid off a five hundred dollar mortgage on the parsonage."

"That is capital! Evidently Mr. Saunders is

a liberal man; and I am sure I am very glad, not only for your sake, but for the sake of my old friend, your father. How long do you stay in Bayport?"

"That depends partly upon you."

"How is that?"

"I may be your passenger on your next voyage."

"You mean to go back to Bombay, then?"

"Yes; or at least in that direction. How long before you will start?"

"Well, you see, Guy, that isn't an easy question to answer."

"Why not, captain?" asked Guy, puzzled.

"I'll tell you. I have been cruising about for about fifteen years without any vacation, and I am minded to stay at home for six months at least, more especially as my only sister is coming on from Wisconsin, where she has been living ever since her marriage, twenty years since. There are only two of us now, for all the rest of the family are dead, and I may never see her again, as she means to go back to Wisconsin after her visit."

"I see, captain," said Guy, in a tone of disappointment. "Of course, I can't blame you, but it will interfere with my plans."

"I don't see why that should be, Guy."

"I can't wait six months."

"You won't need to. The Osprey will sail just the same as ever, but for this one voyage it will have a different commander. You ain't set on sailing with me, are you?"

"I should certainly prefer to sail with you, captain; but the main reason is that I should be more likely to make the arrangement with you that I desire. Who is to command the Osprey in your place?"

"It's an Englishman, Captain John Richmond. I have seen him, but I don't know him very well. I am told that he is a thorough seaman, however."

"I don't doubt that, as your owners have thought fit to employ him. But the arrangement I want to make is a very peculiar one, and I should feel more sure of doing it if you were to be still in command."

"You puzzle me, Guy. Heave ahead, and let me know what you are driving at."

"You are going to the house, are you not?"

"Yes. I came down to take supper with your father, and I may stay over-night if he will keep me."

"He will be delighted to do that. It would take me too long to explain myself now, but I will go back to New Bedford with you to-morrow morning, and then we will talk the matter over. One

thing, however, I will ask. Say nothing of it to father, as I do not propose to tell him."

"Is that right, Guy?"

"Yes. Father isn't a practical man, as you know, and could not advise me in the matter. I have talked it over with Mr. Saunders, who is a shrewd man of business, and I think we can trust to his judgment."

"To be sure! to be sure! Let it lay over till to-morrow, then."

By this time they had reached the parsonage, and the minister welcomed his guest with unaffected cordiality.

"Well, Fenwick, you are not sorry you trusted Guy to me, are you?"

"No! no! my old friend! Nothing but good has come to him. He has been wonderfully fortunate, and has helped me out of what might have proved a serious trouble."

"Aye, Fenwick, he is a good boy."

"I am only sorry that my necessities have robbed the poor boy of his hard earnings. I have been blaming myself for my selfishness in accepting it."

"Don't worry about that, father. I have money left, as much as I shall need. Besides, I am still in Mr. Saunders' employ, and am receiving a liberal salary."

"By the way, Guy," said the captain, "how much are you receiving?"

"I would tell you, if I knew, Captain Glover, but the amount has not been decided upon. I am sure of one thing—that it will be large. Besides, I am authorized to draw what I need."

"It is wonderful that a boy of Guy's age should be so trusted," said Mr. Fenwick.

"True; but Mr. Saunders is under the strongest of obligations to him."

"How is that?"

"Didn't Guy tell you that he had saved his employer's life?"

"No," answered the minister, in great surprise. "Why didn't you tell me, Guy?"

"It didn't come into my mind, father."

"You are modest, Guy," said the captain.

"On the contrary, I might have wished father to understand that it was my business ability that influenced Mr. Saunders to offer me employment."

The story was told, and it was clear that it made Mr. Fenwick more than ever proud of Guy.

"Besides," added Captain Grover, "if Guy had not shown business ability he would not have been trusted with so important a commission."

Guy did not tell the captain of the thousand pounds which had been given him by Mr. Saun-

ders as part compensation for a share in the island treasure. He did not care that anyone should know the extent of his good fortune.

Besides, if things went well, and the expedition which he was arranging should prove successful, he hoped to secure a considerably larger sum. This, however, was not certain. But whichever way things turned out, the five thousand dollars were his, and he wouldn't be expected to return them. Even if he got no more, he would feel amply repaid for his trouble in examining his uncle George's chest.

Nothing more was said during the evening about business. The next morning, after breakfast, Guy notified his father that he would go up to New Bedford with Captain Grover.

Upon this the minister made no comment. He had come to look upon Guy as his own master.

Considering that he had already visited India and England, this was not surprising, although Guy still lacked several years of his majority.

CHAPTER XXIII

ON THE WAY TO NEW BEDFORD

ON the way to New Bedford, Guy broached the subject of engaging the Osprey to visit the Agalegas Islands during her next cruise.

"Then Mr. Saunders believes in the buried treasure?" said Captain Grover.

"He thinks there is a fair chance of it existing."

"Let me understand, then. He is willing to pay for the extra time the voyage will be prolonged in order to make this side trip?"

"Yes, captain."

"I think it will be a wildgoose chase, for my part," remarked the captain, slowly.

"Perhaps so, but Mr. Saunders seems willing to take the risk."

"Well, he is certainly able to do so. He is a very rich man."

"Have you any idea how rich?" asked Guy, with natural curiosity.

"I have heard it conjectured that he is worth a million pounds."

"That is five million dollars."

"Yes."

"That is a great deal of money."

"True. Of course, it is only conjecture, but it is just as likely that he is worth more as that he is worth less."

"I think there is no doubt that he will be able to pay me my salary, then," said Guy, smiling.

"There is not much doubt about that. It occurs to me as strange, since he is so rich, that he should take any trouble about this treasure, which may not exist, after all."

"I really think, Captain Grover, that Mr. Saunders cares very little about it."

"Why, then, should he incur such an outlay in searching for it?"

"I will tell you what I think. Though of very little importance to him, it is of a great deal of importance to me. I think it is this consideration that influences him."

"And very properly, too, since you saved his life."

"That may be, but I appreciate his kindness, nevertheless."

A little later Guy asked: "Do you think your owners will be willing to make an arrangement for this side voyage?"

"That depends on two things: First, whether Mr. Saunders will pay a sum that will compensate them for their trouble; and secondly, whether he will be able to pay the terms they may ask."

"There can be no doubt as to the last."

"No; and this I will assure them. I have known for years Mr. Saunders' financial standing, and his strict sense of honor. You have documents to show that you are his accredited agent?"

"Yes, captain. Besides, I can refer them to Mr. Frazer, his New York correspondent."

"He, too, is well known. There will be no difficulty on that score."

"Have you seen this Captain Richmond?"

"No; but I shall probably meet him to-day."

"I wish I were going to sail with you."

"So do I; but you see how I am situated. If you were willing to wait six months——"

"But I could not do that. I could not remain idle for so long. Besides, I don't think Mr. Saunders will approve it."

"Then we will drop that idea. I will introduce you to my owners, and speak a good word for you. I am sure if they agree, they will be reasonable in their charges."

"How soon will the Osprey be ready to start again?"

"In about two weeks. By the way, Guy, I have a suggestion to make."

"What is it?"

"Suppose you find the island and the treasure, you can't take charge of it single-handed."

"I have been thinking about that, and it puzzled me. What would you advise me to do?"

"I advise you to take two good, strong, reliable men with you who will be able and willing to co-operate with you in carrying out your plans. A boy, single-handed, would be at the mercy of designing or dishonest men."

"I see that."

"If you were sailing with me, you would need no one else, as I would see that no one interfered with you; but that cannot be."

"Where can I find any such men as you speak of? Do you know anyone you can recommend?"

Captain Grover looked thoughtful. Finally his face lighted up.

"Yes," he said. "I think I can find someone. I have a brother-in-law, Abner Titcomb, living in Vernon, Maine, who is at present out of employment. He is a blacksmith by trade, and naturally a strong, muscular man. I think he would be glad to accept an appointment, if you would feel authorized to pay him good, fair wages."

"I would do so. Now as to the second man."

"It will be best to leave the selection to Abner. No doubt he can find some personal friend in the village who will be as well fitted as himself for the work."

"That strikes me favorably."

"Very well; when you have made an arrangement with the owners, and it is fully settled that you will go, I will write to Abner to come right on and talk the matter over."

"All right, Captain Grover. You are doing me a great service."

"Do you know, Guy, I can't help wondering whenever I think of you, a boy of seventeen, with such a load of responsibility on his shoulders. Why, only a few months ago, I thought of you as a mere schoolboy. Now you are the leader of a very important expedition. There are men who would not be competent to fill the place that has been assigned to you."

"I am not certain that I am competent myself," said Guy, seriously.

"I am sure you will do your best. You are not afraid? You have no misgivings as to the outcome?"

"No. On the contrary, I think I enjoy the prospect."

“That will help you to succeed. But here we are at the station. I will conduct you to the office of my owners, John and Charles Gray.”

CHAPTER XXIV

ARRANGING FOR THE VOYAGE

CAPTAIN GROVER introduced Guy to John and Charles Gray, the shipping merchants, by whom he had been for years employed.

Looking upon Guy as a boy, they simply shook hands with him, and did not feel called upon to pay him any further attention; but when the captain explained his business they regarded him with curiosity and surprise.

"I can hardly believe," said the senior of the two, "that this boy can have received such an important commission."

"I am not surprised at that," returned the captain. "It certainly does seem unlikely. I can assure you, however, that there is no mistake about it."

"I don't believe much in hunting for treasures, especially at the other end of the world. To my mind there is not one chance in ten of finding what is sought after."

"Let me call your attention to this fact, Mr.

Gray, that your compensation will not depend upon the finding of the treasure. Mr. Saunders, the boy's employer, is a man of vast wealth, and he backs the enterprise. No matter if it is a failure, he will pay you what he agrees to."

"To be sure, to be sure, that is important. If we are protected, of course, we need not trouble ourselves as to the result of the quest."

"Exactly so."

"The next question is, will Mr. Saunders be willing to pay enough to make up to us for the increased length of the voyage?"

"That is a matter for the boy to decide. Mr. Saunders has given him full power to act for him."

"How much time do you think you will need, Mr. Fenwick?" asked the merchant.

"I have talked the matter over with Captain Grover, and have decided that I had better contract for two months."

"And should the time be prolonged?"

"I will, of course, pay an additional sum."

"That is satisfactory."

"I ought to mention, also," said Guy, "that I intend to have two men with me to assist me in taking possession of the treasure, if I find it."

"Then, in addition to paying for the vessel, there will be three passengers, including yourself?"

"Yes, sir."

"If you will call to-morrow, we will be prepared to submit our terms. We shall need to talk matters over, and estimate what sum we must ask to make ourselves good."

"Very well, Mr. Gray. Then I will come into New Bedford again to-morrow."

"No, Guy, you must stay at my house for the night," interposed the captain. "It is long since you have been my guest, and my wife and daughter will be very glad to see you."

"Thank you, captain. I shall be glad to accept your invitation."

The next day, Guy, accompanied by the captain, called again at the office of the brothers Gray.

They submitted a proposal which, after consulting with Captain Grover, Guy pronounced satisfactory.

"Now that all is settled about the voyage, I will write to my brother-in-law."

"I shall be glad to have him come to New Bedford at once," said Guy, "and his friend, too. You may say in your letter that his wages will commence as soon as he reports for duty."

"That will remove every obstacle. My brother-in-law is a poor man, and he would not be able to remain here any length of time on expense."

Captain Grover dispatched a letter at once.

Abner Titcomb answered it in person. He brought with him a man as tall and muscular as himself, but probably about ten years younger.

Luke Clark was thirty years of age, and Abner Titcomb forty-one.

Guy was pleased with his companions. They looked honest and reliable, and in case he got into any trouble they were abundantly able to protect him.

Titcomb's arms were hard and muscular, and Luke Clark, who was a farmer, was a good match for him.

Guy advanced the two men money to buy an outfit, and when the time came to sail all were in readiness.

It was not till the day of sailing that Guy saw Captain John Richmond, the new commander of the Osprey.

CHAPTER XXV

CAPTAIN RICHMOND

CAPTAIN GROVER went on board the Osprey when she was ready to sail.

"Captain Richmond," said the old captain, "this is my young friend, Guy Fenwick, who has engaged you to take him to one of the Agalegas Islands."

Captain Richmond was a tall, dark-complexioned man, with a sallow skin, and an unpleasant expression of countenance.

"Humph, a boy!" he said, in a tone by no means cordial.

"Yes, a boy, Captain Richmond, but quite as much entitled to consideration as a man. He represents the wealthiest English merchant in Bombay."

Captain Richmond shrugged his shoulders.

"I don't half like leaving the direct course," he said. "It seems like a crazy idea."

He seemed determined to make himself disagreeable. Guy felt it, and he more than ever regretted

that he was not to sail with his friend, Captain Grover.

The latter was considerably annoyed, and he said, sharply: "I take it, Captain Richmond, that this is no concern of yours. This young man has made a contract with the owners, and he has agreed to pay them well for the extra length of the voyage."

"It strikes me, Captain Grover, that you are taking a liberty in talking to me in this style," said Captain Richmond, angrily. "I am the captain, not you!"

"True; but I know the captain's duties. The owners have made a certain agreement with my young friend here, and it is as his friend that I warn you that this contract must be carried out in good faith."

"I will thank you to mind your own business," retorted Captain Richmond, wrathfully.

"I propose to do so, and should you attempt to interfere with Guy in carrying out his plans, I will report this conversation to the owners of the Osprey."

This was said so sternly, and in such a determined tone, that Captain Richmond did not dare to reply. He turned on his heel without a word and walked away.

"I am afraid I shall have trouble with the captain," said Guy, when the latter was out of hearing.

"I wish so much that you were in command."

"I wish so, too, Guy; but you understand why I have taken a vacation."

"Evidently Captain Richmond doesn't like the idea of leaving the direct course."

"No; but it is none of his business. That is a matter between you, representing Mr. Saunders, and the owners."

"I think my being a boy may lead to his treating me with less ceremony."

"The only thing to do, Guy, is to stick up for your rights. Even if you are a boy, your rights are just the same. Should the captain break the contract, you could, of course, withhold the money you have agreed to pay the owners, and this would get him into hot water."

"You advise me, then, to be firm?"

"Surely. It is your right and your duty. And by the way, Guy, you will remember that you are not alone. You have two strong and able assistants who are not boys, but independent men. They will help you to enforce your rights."

"I see that your advice to me was good. Had I gone alone, I am afraid my plans would have

failed. Does the captain know why I want to visit the island?"

"I presume so. Probably he thinks it a foolish enterprise, and that may account in part for his cavalier treatment of you. Of course, it is none of his business, and you need not hesitate to hint as much if he begins to talk roughly."

Guy considered this good advice, and determined to act upon it. He felt that he must deport himself in a manner which might be unbecoming in an ordinary boy, but was called for by the fact that he was acting for Mr. Saunders. It was his duty to guard the interests of his employer.

When he bade good-bye to Captain Grover he felt a presentiment that the voyage on which he had embarked would be an unpleasant one, and that Captain Richmond would make it so. But Guy had pluck, and though he expected a conflict, he did not fear it.

The first outbreak came very soon after the sailing of the Osprey.

Dinner was announced. Guy was, of course, to eat at the captain's table, but when he entered he found that no seats had been placed for his two assistants.

"How is this, Captain Richmond?" said Guy,

as he took his seat. "I see no places at the table for Mr. Titcomb and Mr. Clark."

"They will eat with the sailors," replied the captain, curtly.

"I beg pardon, Captain Richmond," said Guy, calmly, though he was very angry, "I will consent to no such arrangement."

"You won't, eh?" snarled the captain. "Who is the captain of this craft—you or I?"

"You, sir; but my arrangement was not made with you, but with the Messrs. Gray."

"These men are your servants. I don't have servants at my table."

"They are not my servants. They, like myself, are in the employ of Mr. Saunders, of Bombay."

"I don't know Mr. Saunders."

"Perhaps not; but I do. I know that unless these gentlemen are treated with proper respect and consideration he will refuse to pay the sum he has contracted to give your owners."

"I am an English captain, and do not care to meet common men on an equality."

"These men whom you call common are as good as you or myself. One of them is the brother-in-law of Captain Grover; the other is his friend. But, above all, they are American citizens, and as such are entitled to respect."

"I haven't much respect for a Yankee," muttered the captain.

"I won't argue with you on that point, though I am myself a Yankee," returned Guy. "I will, however, call your attention to the contract I made with your owners, the Messrs. Gray. It is expressly stated that these men are to be received as first-class passengers, and to be treated as such. Will you be kind enough to cast your eyes over this document?"

Captain Richmond reluctantly took from Guy's hand the paper he extended to him, and looked over it.

It was as Guy had stated. Titcomb and Clark were designated as first-class passengers, and were to be treated as such.

"I am surprised," said the captain, in a tone of annoyance, "that Messrs. Gray should have made such an agreement."

"It is conclusive, however," returned Guy, coldly. "Will you kindly see that seats are placed for my two companions?"

"It shall be done at the next meal. To-day they can eat as soon as we have finished."

Though Guy might have demanded more than this, he did not care to make a fuss. He felt that in the controversy he had carried his point.

Guy spoke of the matter afterward to the two men.

"Why," exclaimed Abner Titcomb, "the mean upstart! So he thinks we are not fit to sit at the table with his royal highness, does he? If I had him at my home in Maine we would soon see who is the best man."

"I wouldn't have consented to eat with the sailors," said Luke Clark, "though there isn't a sailor aboard that I don't feel as much respect for as I do for Captain Richmond. But I know that he meant to insult and degrade us, and I have too much respect for myself as an American citizen to allow that."

Though Guy had carried his point, neither he nor his companions enjoyed their meals at the captain's table. The only other person who sat there was the mate, and he would often be on duty, so that he would not eat at the same time with them.

His name was Forbush, and he was a New Hampshire man, as agreeable as the captain was morose.

Generally there was very little conversation at meal-time. Captain Richmond addressed Guy, but seldom vouchsafed a word to Titcomb or Clark.

"I wish Forbush were captain," said Abner Tit-

comb, one day. "He is one of our own people, while Captain Richmond has no sympathy for us."

"I wonder why the owners gave the command to such a man?" added Luke Clark.

"He is an experienced seaman, and understands his business, so Captain Grover told me. I suppose that accounts for it," answered Guy.

"I am afraid we shall see trouble before the end of the voyage," said Titcomb, lowering his voice. "I will tell you what I have heard of the captain from one of the sailors."

CHAPTER XXVI

A BRUTAL CAPTAIN

NO ONE on board liked Captain Richmond. He was a surly, disagreeable man, who liked better to sneer than to smile.

He was a great contrast to Captain Grover, with his pleasant, hearty manners. Guy tolerated him, and treated him respectfully, but Abner Titcomb and Luke Clark repaid his rudeness with coldness.

They had the self-respect of independent American citizens, and would not overlook the uncalled for and studied impoliteness of the captain.

Captain Richmond had one redeeming feature. He was a good seaman. He seemed well qualified for the command of a merchant vessel.

He was strict in his discipline, but that is always required. Captain Grover was strict, and his crew liked him. On the other hand, there was not a sailor who did not dislike Captain Richmond.

Among the seamen was a young fellow of nineteen, from Castine, Maine. He was known to

Abner Titcomb, who, while on a visit to that town, had become acquainted with James Low and his family.

As Titcomb had not seen Low since he was a boy of fifteen, he did not immediately recognize him till James called him by name. The boy seemed very much pleased to find on board one with whom he had had a previous acquaintance.

Titcomb was speaking to the young sailor one day when Captain Richmond came up.

"Mr. Titcomb," he said, "what can you have to say to one of my crew?"

The tone was insolent, and Abner Titcomb resented it.

"It happens, Captain Richmond," he replied, "that this young fellow and I are old acquaintances. I know him and his family."

"That may be, sir," returned the captain, with an incredulous sneer.

"What do you mean by that, Captain Richmond? Do you mean to doubt my word?"

"I would have you understand, Mr. Titcomb, that I am the captain of this ship, and I will not tolerate insolence from you or any other man!"

"There has been no insolence except on your part. I am a passenger on this vessel, and I claim to be treated with civility."

He looked the captain straight in the face, and there was a look of determination in his eyes that made Captain Richmond, who was a bully, but not brave, think he had gone far enough.

"I prefer that you should not speak to any member of my crew," he rejoined, as he turned abruptly away.

"James," said Titcomb, "as I don't wish to get you into any trouble, I will hereafter seek opportunities to speak to you when the captain is not on deck."

"I wish Captain Grover were in command," replied the boy. "*He* was a gentleman."

From this time Captain Richmond seemed to transfer to James Low some of the dislike he felt for Titcomb. The latter was not in his power, but as James Low was only a sailor, it was a simple matter to make things uncomfortable for him.

One morning Low appeared on deck looking pale and ill. He had malaria in his system, and when he shipped he was not in good physical condition.

"What is the matter, James?" asked Abner Titcomb, who was struck by the young fellow's appearance.

"I don't know. My head aches terribly, and I can hardly stand."

"Why don't you report yourself sick to the captain, and ask leave to go to your bunk?"

"He wouldn't believe it."

"He would be a brute if he didn't grant your request."

"Hush! Here he comes!"

Captain Richmond strode on deck, and looked about him in his masterful way.

He noticed James Low's slow motions.

"Be lively there!" he cried. "You lazy loafer! You're skulking!"

"Captain Richmond," said the poor fellow, "I feel very sick. My head is swimming."

"Sick, are you? Sick of work, most likely," sneered the captain.

"Indeed, sir, I am very ill. If you would kindly let me lie down for an hour or two——"

"Why, you lazy scoundrel!" roared the captain, in a rage, "I never heard such bare-faced insolence! Up to the masthead with you, and stay there till you are ready to do your duty!"

James Low turned a look of anguish upon the captain.

"Indeed, sir, I am very sick," he said.

As the poor fellow spoke, his face became of a greenish hue, and he sank to the deck, where he lay without sense or motion.

By this time Captain Richmond was intensely irritated, and in his fury he drew back his foot and kicked the prostrate boy brutally.

The poor fellow quivered a little, but he was too far gone in unconsciousness to make any other demonstration.

"Shame! Shame!" was heard from at least two persons who witnessed the captain's cruelty.

He looked sharply around, and roared out: "Who said that?"

"I did, for one," responded Guy, pale, but his eyes flashing with indignation.

"Don't you dare to say it again!" cried the captain, with a volley of oaths.

"I did, for another," said Abner Titcomb, coming forward, his face stern and threatening.

"You did, eh? You'll find yourself in irons if you are not careful. I'm not going to have any landlubber interfering with my discipline. D'ye hear that?"

"Captain Richmond," said Titcomb, "you are the greatest brute I ever came across!"

"Don't you dare to say that again!" cried the captain, almost foaming at the mouth.

"No one but a brute would kick a sick boy!"

"Sick? He's shamming!"

"He is not shamming, and you know that as well as I do."

"I'll put you in irons, sir! By heavens, you are inciting mutiny!"

"If you put me in irons, you'll have something to put me in irons for."

"What d'ye mean by that?"

"I mean that if you are captain of this vessel, I am a man, and I won't allow you to treat a poor sick sailor as you have treated James Low."

"You won't allow me!" yelled the captain. "You'll see! I'll do it again for your gratification!" And he drew back his foot as if to kick the prostrate figure once more.

Quick and stern came these words from Abner Titcomb:

"If you kick that boy again, Captain Richmond, by the heavens above me I'll fell you to the deck and kick you!"

There was something so resolute in Titcomb's words and manner that Captain Richmond, furious as he was, was impressed in spite of himself.

"Mr. Titcomb," he said, "I can have you arrested and imprisoned for what you have said."

"If you don't desist at once I will report your brutality to the American consul at the first port at which we stop, and demand your trial!"

As has already been said, Captain Richmond, though a bully, was a coward, and he did not dare to follow up his brutal treatment, much as he desired to do so.

"You may find that someone else will report to the consul," he said, sullenly. "You will find, sir, that it is a serious thing to interfere with discipline on board ship."

James Low moved slightly, opened his eyes, and seemed coming out of his stupor.

Captain Richmond bent over, seized him by the shoulder, and raised him to his feet.

"Now go below," he said. "You will be kept on bread and water for the next twenty-four hours."

James Low was glad enough to creep below, and the threat did not disturb him in the least.

Anything was better than going about his work when he was scarcely able to stand erect.

Captain Richmond, with as much dignity as he could command, went to his own cabin, and left the field to Titcomb and Guy.

"What do you think of such a man as that?" said Titcomb, turning to Guy.

"I never felt so indignant in my life! He is not a man, but a brute! You saved the poor fellow, Mr. Titcomb."

"Yes; and I mean to shield him from the captain's malice hereafter, for he will undoubtedly try to do him a mischief."

"What would you have done had the captain kicked him again?"

"What would I have done? Don't ask me. I would have treated Captain Richmond worse than he treated James, regardless of consequences."

CHAPTER XXVII

GUY AND THE CAPTAIN

A STRONG, resolute man makes himself respected. Abner Titcomb had asserted his manhood and faced the captain fearlessly.

Autocrat as he aspired to be, Captain Richmond did not dare to go to the lengths he intended.

He made a show of maintaining his authority by ordering James Low below, and restricting him to bread and water. This was not, on the whole, a hardship, as it gave the poor fellow what he needed—complete rest.

Feverish as he was, also, the scanty diet was not, on the whole, undesirable. At the end of twenty-four hours he felt better, and returned to his work.

The captain did not molest him further, though he was seen at times to look at him with a contracted brow, as if he hated him. For the present, at least, however, he desisted from any further persecution, and as Low did his duty faithfully he gave his captain no excuse for ill treatment.

The weather was, on the whole, favorable, and in due time they reached the Indian Ocean.

As they drew nearer the group of islands, one of which, as Guy believed, contained the mysterious treasure of which he was in search, Guy became restless and excited. He held conferences with his two assistants, and managed to excite their interest, though he found that they were not so sanguine as himself.

"I have heard such stories before," said Abner Titcomb, "and though it may all be true, you must not be too much disappointed if you don't find what you expect."

"I shall certainly be disappointed, Mr. Titcomb. My uncle's letter was so direct and circumstantial that it carried conviction of its truth to my mind."

"No doubt he believed it himself, but the sailor from whom he got his information may have been spinning a yarn."

"You must remember, Mr. Titcomb, that he was on his deathbed. That is hardly a time to spin yarns."

"True; and I hope his story was correct."

"It was certainly natural. Granted that there are pirates, they would be likely to have a place of concealment for their booty."

"I don't say anything against that, Guy."

The two men, though in Guy's employ, were in the habit of calling him by his first name.

"At any rate, Luke and I are ready to co-operate with you and help you in every way to secure this treasure."

"I don't doubt that, Mr. Titcomb. I feel sure of your fidelity."

The time came when it would be necessary to deviate from the usual course and make for the islands.

Not a word had been exchanged between Guy and the captain on this subject since the first day of the voyage, and he thought it well to bring the matter once more to the attention of the Osprey's commander.

"Captain Richmond," he said, one day, as that officer was about to leave the deck, "I should be glad to have a few words with you."

The captain regarded Guy with an unpleasant frown, and said, sneeringly: "Perhaps you have some advice to give me as to the management of the vessel."

"You are mistaken, sir," said Guy, with dignity. "I wish to speak to you about the business which has brought me on board."

"Very well. I will listen to what you have to say."

They were now in the cabin. Guy took a seat opposite the captain, and began:

"I believe you know, in a general way, the object of my expedition."

"I know very little about it," said the captain, indifferently.

"It is desirable that you should know definitely. You understand that I wish to visit one of the Agalegas Islands?"

"Which one?"

"I can't tell yet."

"Then it looks as if we were bound on a fool's errand."

"No. I have a description of the particular island I want to visit, explicit enough for me to identify it when I see it."

"What do you know about these islands? Are they inhabited?"

"I don't know."

"What *do* you know about them?" asked the captain, rudely.

"Very little. It is not necessary that I should know much. The main point is this: I have reason to believe that on the island I seek there is concealed somewhere a large treasure, stored there years since by a band of pirates."

Captain Richmond laughed incredulously.

"That is an old woman's tale," he said. "And it is to find this treasure that you want me to turn aside from my course and waste perhaps a couple of months?"

Guy was provoked at the other's words and manner.

"I don't think, Captain Richmond," he said, "there is any reason to complain of this. You, or rather your owners, will be well compensated for any prolongation of the voyage."

"I suppose we are to be paid out of this fabulous treasure," sneered the captain.

"No, sir. My principal, Mr. Saunders, of Bombay, is abundantly able to pay what he has contracted to do, even if the treasure proves fabulous, as you suggest."

"So you talked him into a belief in its existence?"

"As to that, he thinks there is sufficient chance of its existence to warrant the outlay he has made."

"Then I don't think much of his good judgment."

"It does not seem to me, Captain Richmond, that this concerns anyone except himself. It is merely a business venture."

"How long do you expect me to cruise round

among these islands?" asked the captain, evidently in bad humor.

"I can't say yet. Of course, I shall want to make a thorough search."

"And in the meantime the Osprey is to lie at anchor, and all on board are to fold their hands?"

"As to that I have no control. It may be interesting to you to explore the islands. At any rate, you will be paid for your time."

"I shouldn't like this thing to get out. I should become a laughing-stock."

"I don't see why. You will simply be carrying out the instructions of your owners."

"What more have you to say to me, Mr. Fenwick?"

As the captain pronounced Guy's name his inflection was sarcastic, but Guy did not expect courtesy from this quarter and he chose to take no notice of the slur.

"Were you ever in the neighborhood of the Agalegas Islands, Captain Richmond?"

"No; and I presume very few skippers have had occasion to go anywhere near them, except, of course, your friends the pirates."

"I suppose it will soon be necessary to change your course, so as to steer for them?"

"I think you can safely leave that to me, Mr.

Fenwick. Did you seek this interview in order to give me advice?"

"No, captain; only to have an understanding. Though you don't seem to have a favorable opinion of my chances of success, I am sure you will help me so far as lies in your power."

"Humph!" returned the captain. "I don't know that I am called on to do anything except to sail among the islands, and give you a chance to pick out the one you are in search of."

"If you will allow me, I will read you a short description of the island."

"Go on."

"It is well wooded to within a mile of the shore; toward the center there is a hill, or slight eminence, perhaps a hundred and fifty feet in altitude. The extent of it is probably five miles by eight."

"The island seems to be quite large. Do you expect to dig it all over before giving up your search?"

"That will not be necessary. I have some directions as to the place where the treasure is hidden."

"This seems very much like a fairy tale, Mr. Fenwick. Would you like my opinion of this man who has sent you on such a wildgoose chase?"

"You can express it to me, if you like, Captain Richmond," said Guy, with dignity.

"Then I think he's a blooming idiot, neither more nor less."

This was said in a very offensive tone.

"I don't think, Captain Richmond, that you will find many persons in Bombay who will agree with you in your estimate of Mr. Saunders' character. Blooming idiots don't, as a general thing, succeed in business as he has done."

Captain Richmond listened to these words with an ironical smile, and Guy left his presence satisfied that he could expect no help from him beyond what he felt obliged to give.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE ISLAND AT LAST

GUY was not without fears that Captain Richmond would, on some pretext, decline to carry out his contract, and refuse to visit the Agalegas Islands.

A captain at sea is such an autocrat that he often takes indefensible liberties, and transcends his rightful authority. He can make things exceedingly uncomfortable for anyone for whom he feels a dislike or cherishes a grudge.

It soon became evident, however, that whatever opinion he might have of Guy's enterprise, he didn't intend to interpose any obstacle to his visit to the islands.

Abner Titcomb, though for the last ten years a blacksmith, was from the age of twenty to thirty years a seaman, and had risen to be a first mate. He could, in an emergency, have taken the place of captain and commanded a vessel.

He assured Guy, from his own observations, that

Captain Richmond had changed his course, and was steering in the direction of the islands.

"That relieves me very much," said Guy. "I didn't know what the captain's obstinacy might have led him to do."

"He may still be able to thwart you, even after reaching the island," returned Titcomb.

"I won't borrow trouble in advance," said Guy. "The first step is to reach the island. After that I will manage to carry out the rest of the program."

The crew consisted of Irish and Americans, with one exception. This was Guido Leporelli, a swarthy Italian, who was, upon the whole, a good sailor.

He was short, and of light weight, but strong and muscular. He held little intercourse with the rest of the crew, partly perhaps because he was not a good English scholar, and could not speak the language fluently, though he understood sea terms.

Guido was, as a rule, quiet and well behaved, and had not incurred any rebukes from the officers. One morning, however, as Guy made his appearance on deck, he beheld the captain, in a furious rage, confronting the Italian, who in stature was greatly his inferior.

What the trouble was about, Guy did not learn, but it ended in the captain felling the Italian to the deck by a powerful blow.

Guido rose slowly. His swarthy face was pale, and his eyes gleamed with a fierce and baleful light; but he said nothing.

"Now go to your work, you dog!" cried the captain.

Only Guy noticed the terrible rage visible in the Italian's face.

He spoke of it to Abner Titcomb.

"Captain Richmond has made a dangerous enemy," he said.

"Who is it?"

"The Italian sailor."

Then Guy related what he had seen.

"What can he have done?"

Inquiry showed that there had been no cause for the captain's violent outbreak. He was in one of his fits of periodical irritation, and Guido, unfortunately for him, chanced to be in his way, and received the benefit of it.

"I shouldn't like to have an Italian for an enemy" said Titcomb, thoughtfully. "But it is Captain Richmond's lookout. He may some day repent his violence."

There were others who shared Mr. Titcomb's views, but gradually the affair faded out of remembrance.

Guido Leporelli seemed himself to have forgot-

ten his ill treatment. He went about his duties in the same quiet way he had always done.

As for Captain Richmond, he never troubled himself to think of the Italian. If anyone had suggested that he stood in danger he would have laughed at the idea.

He was a tall, strong man, weighing not far from two hundred pounds, while Leporelli would scarcely have tipped the scales at one hundred and twenty.

The weather was delightful; the temperature was warm and balmy, with no signs of a storm, and day after day the Osprey glided along under smiling skies.

"How are you enjoying the voyage, Guy?" asked Abner Titcomb.

"So much that I should like to see it prolonged but for one thing."

"What is that?"

"I am anxious to reach the island so as to settle the question about the treasure."

"You are anxious to become rich, then, Guy?"

"It isn't so much that, but Mr. Saunders, at my suggestion, has invested a good deal of money in this expedition. I don't want him to be a loser."

"He would not blame you."

"Perhaps not; but I should blame myself. Be-

sides, you know how the captain has derided the scheme?"

"Yes."

"I want to prove to him that he is in the wrong. He calls Mr. Saunders 'a blooming idiot,' and I have no doubt he applies that name to me, also."

"Well, Guy, I hope you will succeed. I am not over and above sanguine myself, as you know. I have heard and read of too many enterprises like yours, and that makes me incredulous."

"Still, you won't call me 'a blooming idiot' even if I do fail," said Guy, smiling.

"No, Guy, I think you are very far from an idiot. I should be more likely to apply that name to the captain."

"Why?"

"On account of his treatment of the Italian sailor."

"Leporelli doesn't seem to bear any grudge, so far as we can judge from his conduct."

"Don't judge too hastily. An Italian and an Indian have long memories for injuries."

Since the conversation already reported between Guy and the captain, nothing further had been said. Guy would have been glad to speak, but he saw that Captain Richmond was quite incredulous,

and it would be like having cold water dashed in his face to talk it over with him again.

Had Captain Grover been in command, Guy would have had daily conferences with him, but the two men were altogether different.

Though he did not know the ship's reckoning, Guy was of opinion that they must be very near the Agalegas Islands. He longed to ask the captain, but did not venture to do so.

It was Captain Richmond himself who broached the subject.

He was pacing the deck one afternoon when he met Guy.

"Come here, Fenwick," he said. "I want to speak to you."

Guy joined him in his walk. His heart beat quickly, for he felt that the captain was about to speak to him on the subject nearest to his heart.

"We are close to the Agalegas Islands," said the captain, abruptly. "To-morrow we shall probably sight some of them."

"I am glad to hear it, captain," responded Guy, joyfully.

"I don't know how many of them there are, but I judge there may be a considerable number. Do you expect me to visit them all?"

"No, Captain Richmond. If you remember, I

read you a description of the one in which I feel an interest. That description is so minute that I don't think we are likely to mistake it."

"You don't know the relative position of the island, whether it is the nearest to us, or the furthest?"

"No, sir."

"Humph! That is not very encouraging."

"If you will excuse my suggesting it, I think it is likely to be the nearest."

"And why?"

"The pirates would probably consider one island as good for their purpose as another, and would select the first that presented itself."

"That's all conjecture."

"That is all I claim for it."

"At any rate, I hope your conjecture is a correct one. I haven't much faith in your enterprise, and I am anxious to be detained as short a time as possible."

Captain Richmond left Guy and went to his cabin. Guy understood that he did not care to speak further on the subject.

Early the next morning, as Guy lay in his bunk, there was a loud knock at the door of his stateroom.

"What's the matter?" he called out, drowsily.

"Matter enough!" cried Abner Titcomb, for it was he. "We are in sight of land!"

Guy sprang from his berth and ran up on deck.

There, at the distance of half a mile, lay a beautiful island, a delightful sight after the thousands of miles of ocean they had traversed.

But, best of all, Guy noted with wildly beating heart that *it was well wooded to within a mile of the shore; and toward the center there was a hill, or slight eminence, perhaps a hundred and fifty feet in altitude!*

It was evidently the island of which he was in search.

CHAPTER XXIX

ON THE ISLAND

WHEN Guy scanned the island, and saw that it answered the description given in the papers bequeathed him by his uncle, his heart beat gladly. His pride was interested in the reliability of the information given him.

It was on the faith of these that Mr. Saunders, his employer, had risked a considerable sum of money, and now it looked as if he would be richly repaid for his investment.

As Guy stood on deck regarding the island, Captain Richmond walked up to his side.

"Well, captain," said Guy, "we have been successful. This is the island I wanted to find."

"Yes, it is the island; but what good will it do you?"

Guy had not made a confidant of the captain except in a general way. He distrusted the man, and feared that in some manner he would interfere with his plans.

"I can tell you better after a few days," answered Guy, guardedly.

"I suppose you expect to find an immense treasure?" said Captain Richmond, with a sneer.

"Perhaps so."

"Then all I can say is that you are probably doomed to disappointment."

"Why do you say that?"

"All these stories of hidden treasures are old women's tales."

"If I am disappointed," said Guy, somewhat nettled, "you will not be a loser."

"I wasn't thinking of that; but I hate to see a man make a fool of himself."

"Am I the man?" asked Guy, smiling.

"No, but the man who has supplied you with money to make this expedition."

"When you see Mr. Saunders you can tell him so."

"Now, how long do you propose to delay my voyage in keeping me in this out-of-the-way place?"

"As short a time as possible, Captain Richmond. I should like to go on shore at once, if convenient, and commence my search. Mr. Titcomb and Mr. Clark will go with me."

"Very well. I will send you ashore, as you de-

sire. I have this to say, however, that I shall not be willing to remain here more than three days."

"I protest against this limit, Captain Richmond," said Guy, indignantly. "The contract which I made with your owners says nothing of any such limitations. I am paying a handsome sum for any detention which my business here may occasion."

"*You* are paying——" began the captain, with a sneer.

"Yes, as the agent of Mr. Saunders," responded Guy, firmly.

The captain turned upon his heel and left Guy, but he gave orders that the long-boat should be lowered, and in five minutes Guy and his two assistants were on their way to the island.

The Osprey anchored about a hundred yards from the shore, in order not to get into too shallow water. The boat trip was, therefore, a brief one.

It was a beautiful morning. The island smiled in the bright rays of a tropical sun, and the luxuriant vegetation that covered the hills and plains made it look very attractive.

"This is a charming spot, Guy," said Abner Titcomb. "The pirates knew what they were about when they selected it."

"I imagine they cared very little for its appear-

ance," said Guy. "It seems to be the nearest of the islands, and, therefore, the most accessible."

"If I were well provided with comforts, I shouldn't object to spending a few months here," said Luke Clark.

"Nor I, if at the end of that time I could get off and sail for home."

They made for a little, sandy beach on the south shore, and one of the sailors, leaping out of the boat, hauled it upon the beach. Guy and his two assistants sprang out.

"When do you want us to come back?" asked the boatswain.

Guy took out his watch.

"We shall spend the day on the island," he said. "You can come for us at six o'clock."

"But we shall get hungry before that," objected Titcomb.

"I thought of that, and asked the steward to put up some lunch for us," answered Guy, pointing to a square package wrapped in stout paper.

"We shall want drink, also."

"It will be strange if we can't find a spring on the island."

Guy and his two friends stood on the shore and watched the boat as it was rowed back to the ship.

"I can understand the feelings of Robinson Cru-

soe," Guy said. "Here we are many thousand miles from home, on an island which has not even a name, so far as I know."

"True; but there's our ship, ready to carry us away when we choose. That makes the difference between us and Crusoe."

"I should prefer that there should be a difference. I don't care to feel myself a prisoner here."

"What are your plans for the day, Guy? You are the leader of our expedition. Shall we begin our search for the treasure immediately?"

"To-day let us simply be explorers. I should like to see something of the island. Suppose we strike for the woods."

"Just as you say. We shall have a delightful walk."

The woods began about a mile from the beach, but there were scattered trees on the way.

On their branches were birds of strange plumage. They were singing, but the songs were unlike any that the three explorers had heard in America.

There were flowers, also, for on this far-away island it was the season of blooming, and their fragrance perfumed the air.

"I wonder if there are any inhabitants?" said Luke Clark.

"Probably there are no white inhabitants, and

I hope there are none of a different race. They might prove dangerous, and interfere with our plans."

"It almost seems a waste of productive power that such a delightful island should be uninhabited," said Abner Titcomb. "Suppose it were within a few miles of Boston or New York, or near Portland, how it would attract visitors."

"Like Peak's Island," suggested Luke Clark.

"Where is that?" asked Guy.

"Three miles from Portland. It is much smaller than this, but it attracts many visitors in the summer."

"Unfortunately, we can't move this island. Indeed, I shouldn't want to till I have found the treasure."

They reached the edge of the woods and plunged in. There was very little underbrush, but the trees rose straight and erect, branching at a considerable distance from the ground.

"What a fine grove for a camp meeting," said Luke Clark. "Do you know how far the trees reach back, Guy?"

"Three or four miles, according to my description."

"Shall we push through?"

"Yes. Back of the woods rises the small hill

indicated on my plan of the island. I propose that we ascend that, and take a general view. It may be high enough for us to see the shore on the other side."

It was not a work of difficulty to reach the hill and ascend it.

The rise was gradual, and the hill was comparatively bare of trees. Thus far they had discovered nothing that indicated any previous occupation by white men; but now on the summit of the hill they saw a pole looking somewhat like a telegraph pole.

"Do you see that, Guy?" said Abner Titcomb.

"Yes."

"That must have been placed there by white visitors."

"Probably by some of the pirates of whom my uncle speaks."

"Yes; and so far it is a confirmation of his story."

"You are right. It should be looked upon as encouraging."

There was something else that suggested former visits. On the top of the hill, a hundred feet from the pole, was a rude seat made by a plank resting upon supports at either end.

"Let us sit down," said Guy, "and take a general survey of the island."

CHAPTER XXX

LOOKING FOR TREASURE

THOUGH not very high, the hill on which Guy and his friends were seated was of sufficient altitude to command a general view of the entire island. With the exception of this hill, the surface of the island was flat, and it was possible to see its general contour.

In front, at a comparatively short distance, the Osprey rode at anchor.

"It is the sight of the ship that makes me feel comfortable," said Abner Titcomb, pointing to it.

Through the clear atmosphere they could see distinctly all that passed on board the vessel.

"See," said Luke Clark, "the captain is pacing the deck with an impatient step. Ten to one he doesn't enjoy being detained here."

"I know he doesn't," said Guy. "He loses no opportunity to ridicule my search after the treasure, and thinks Mr. Saunders an idiot for the expense he has incurred in chartering the vessel."

"I don't see what business it is of his," said

Titcomb. "You, or rather Mr. Saunders, are paying the owners well for the time consumed."

"True; but he is impatient to go on to Bombay. He asked me if I couldn't get through my search in three days."

"What did you say?"

"That this time was entirely insufficient."

"It is a pity that Captain Grover is not in command."

"Yes. It would be a great deal more comfortable for me."

From time to time, as they could see, the captain looked toward the island and then resumed his walk.

"I wonder he doesn't propose to come on shore and aid you in the search, Guy."

"I don't think he cares to have me succeed. For some reason which I don't understand he appears to have taken a dislike to me."

"It is partly because you are independent of him. He has authority over all on board the Osprey except ourselves, and this chafes him."

"I shouldn't like to be in the power of such a man."

"Nor I. But for your firmness, Luke and myself would have lost our cabin privileges and been obliged to eat with the sailors."

"So far as pleasant society is concerned, I should be as willing to keep company with them as with Captain Richmond."

"I feel the same way, but I was unwilling that the captain should impose on me."

"Boys," said Luke Clark, suddenly, "I think we made a mistake in not bringing some water with us. I am beginning to feel thirsty."

"I shall feel so soon," said Titcomb. "We may as well hunt for a spring. Thirst is, if anything, harder to bear than hunger."

"Very well," said Guy. "Let us make a search."

They descended the opposite slope of the hill, and in a covert near the bottom found a clear, pellucid spring, from which they dipped water in the hollow of their hands and drank.

There was a slight mineral flavor which was not unpleasant, and all three enjoyed the cooling draughts.

"This is a very important discovery," said Titcomb, "and would be even more so if we were obliged to remain any length of time on the island. Now, Guy, what shall we do next?"

"Continue our exploration," said Guy. "This is only the first day, remember."

"But the captain wants to limit you to three days."

"Yes; but I have not accepted the limitation. After traveling so many thousand miles, I don't propose to be hurried."

"I applaud your pluck, Guy. You have an unusually strong will for a boy of sixteen. From whom do you take it?"

"Not from my father," answered Guy. "He is altogether too gentle and yielding, and allows himself to be bossed by one of his deacons. Fortunately, I thwarted Deacon Crane in one of his schemes when I was at home."

"Your father is a minister, isn't he?"

"Yes."

"That accounts for it."

"I don't know. Some ministers are quite as fond of having their own way as any of their congregation. However, that isn't the case with my father."

"I suppose, Guy, you have some clue to the place where the treasure is concealed?" said Titcomb. "I have not inquired, hitherto, but it seems to me that while we are exploring we may as well keep our eyes open, and perhaps we may chance upon the spot."

"It is time I told you what I know," answered Guy. "I am obliged to confess that the directions are not as clear and explicit as I should wish. Yet

I think they may be sufficiently so for our purpose."

"Go ahead, Guy," said Luke Clark. "I confess that my curiosity is aroused."

"Then I will tell you all I know."

Guy took from his pocket a roll of paper, discolored by time, and unfolding it, read this paragraph:

"There is a place on the island where six trees are arranged (by nature) in the shape of a cross, as this drawing will show.



"Between the second and third of these trees, counting from the top downward, the pirate's treasure is concealed. A large cavity was dug out, and in this was placed a sailor's chest, in which are stored gold, silver, and jewels, besides a considerable amount in bank notes—some English, some

French, and some American. As to the value of these treasures, no one knew anything except the captain, and possibly even he was uninformed."

"There is more," added Guy, "but this is all that is of importance."

Abner Titcomb and Luke Clark listened thoughtfully.

"That seems a pretty good clue," said Abner, at length. "It is hardly likely that there will be more than one group of trees arranged in the shape of a cross."

"You are, no doubt, right."

"I move that we use our eyes as we go along. We may come upon this cross this very day."

"I wish we might."

"If we do, we may conclude that we have succeeded in our quest, even if we do not dig at once for the treasure."

"Yes."

"I shall feel more interest in our walk now, as we shall have an object in view."

"It seems to me," said Guy, "that the pirates might easily have selected a place more difficult to find."

"I don't know about that. Of course, now that we have the clue, it seems simple, but otherwise

how could we be led to suppose that the treasure would be hidden there rather than in any other place? All puzzles are easy when you have found out the key to them."

After this the party naturally confined their explorations to the wooded part of the island. Somewhere among this multitude of trees were to be found the six trees arranged in the shape of a cross.

"It seems as if it ought to be easy to find," said Guy.

"Yes; but you must remember that the woods, besides running back for perhaps three or four miles, reach nearly across the island in breadth. It may be a long and tedious search, after all."

"But I don't think we can fail to succeed at last."

"Yet it may be a matter of weeks before we find the cross."

"At any rate we have the clue. It does not require sharpness, only patience."

When midday came all felt hungry, and they sat down to eat the provisions they had brought with them.

As they had discovered water nowhere else, they were obliged to work their way back to the spring which they had originally chanced upon.

"It is a pity that we didn't bring a pail with us to hold water, so that we need not have been obliged to retrace our footsteps."

"We shall know better how to manage to-morrow."

The three explorers wandered about till they were very tired, and a full hour before the time set they were on the beach waiting for the boat to carry them back to the Osprey. They were seen from the vessel, and in a few minutes they were on board again.

"Well," said Captain Richmond, addressing Guy, "what have you accomplished?"

"We have discovered a spring and explored a part of the island."

"Have you found the treasure?"

"Not yet," answered Guy.

"So I supposed," returned the captain, with a sneer.

He said nothing more, but he had succeeded in making Guy feel uncomfortable.

CHAPTER XXXI

A STARTLING SUGGESTION

THE program for the next day was like that of the first, except that no time was spent on a general exploration of the island.

The impatience shown by Captain Richmond made Guy fear that unless the treasure were speedily found he would object to staying longer. Of course, this would be in violation of the agreement he had made with the owners, but there was no court to enforce that agreement, and if the captain should, in his obstinacy, decide to sail away, the whole object of the expedition would be lost, or, at any rate, indefinitely deferred.

Therefore, on reaching the island in the morning, Guy and his two friends immediately set about searching for the six trees arranged in the shape of a cross. It did not seem that it would be difficult to find them, but nevertheless three more days slipped away, and at the end of that time they were no nearer success than before.

Even Guy began to feel anxious. He knew that in the event of the failure of the expedition Mr.

Saunders might blame him for the loss of the considerable sum which had been spent in fitting it out, and, moreover, he would feel in duty bound to return the five thousand dollars which the merchant had advanced to him.

A part of this sum had been spent, some of it in paying the mortgage on his father's house, and he would be left hopelessly in debt.

"Don't feel blue, Guy," said Abner Titcomb. "It took us months to come here, and surely we can spare a month for the search."

"Yes, Abner; but will the captain wait for us that long?"

"There is the rub?" said Titcomb. "For some reason he is very impatient, and very averse to staying here."

"Probably he is naturally impatient," suggested Luke Clark.

"That does not explain it. He is evidently unfriendly to Guy, and does not want him to succeed."

"And for that reason I am all the more determined to succeed," said Guy, firmly.

For two hours after this they searched vigorously and earnestly. Not a clump of trees but was scanned critically, in the hope that it might be the lucky cross of which they were in quest.

The time most dreaded by Guy was the evening and the return to the ship unsuccessful and empty-handed.

Captain Richmond was always on hand, and always put the question:

"Well, have you succeeded?"

"Not yet," answered Guy, reluctantly.

"Of course not," retorted the captain, contemptuously.

"But I mean to do so," said Guy, pluckily.

"And how many years do you expect me to ride at anchor here waiting for you?"

"We have been here but five days, so far," said Guy.

"And have accomplished nothing. You might as well make up your mind, first as last, that there is nothing to be found here. I don't believe, for my part, that any pirates ever visited the island."

"Why, then, should a dying man tell my uncle so, Captain Richmond?"

"It was a sailor's yarn. There are some men who can't help lying, even upon their deathbed."

"Don't you believe any pirates ever concealed their booty?"

"Nine out of ten of the stories about pirates and hidden treasure are fabrications."

"Be that as it may, Captain Richmond," said

Guy, with dignity, "you will lose nothing by waiting."

"I shall lose my patience, for one thing."

"I don't think you have much."

"No impertinence, young man!" said Captain Richmond, angrily.

"I don't mean to be impertinent, but I want you to carry out in good faith the terms of the agreement I made with your owners."

The captain walked away without a word, but there was a look upon his face which Guy did not like. He knew that if the captain chose to put an end to his stay upon the island he would have no alternative but to submit, and would be obliged to keep on to Bombay in the humiliation of failure.

Guy's fears were increased by a few words he had with Frank Low, the young sailor already referred to as an object of dislike to the captain.

It was one evening, when the captain had retired early.

"Guy—Mr. Fenwick," said Frank, "let me speak a few words to you."

"By all means, Frank. You need not call me Mr. Fenwick. I am only a boy like yourself—
younger, indeed."

"But you are a passenger, while I am only a poor sailor."

"You are my friend, all the same. Now what have you to tell me?"

"Captain Richmond is in a great funk at being obliged to stay here while you are on shore."

"I know that very well, Frank, but he has no right to be. I made a special agreement with the owners of the Osprey for which they will be handsomely paid."

Frank shook his head.

"That's all very well, Master Guy, but the captain will play you a trick if he can."

"What trick can he play me?"

"He can forbid your going on shore again."

"He wouldn't do that. He knows that in that case, the contract being broken, I should have an excuse for refusing to pay the sum agreed upon."

"Is it after hidden gold you are searching, Master Guy?"

"Yes; after treasure concealed on this island by pirates."

"Do you believe it is there?"

"Yes. I have very good reason to believe it."

"Then why don't you get the captain on your side by offering him something—say a thousand dollars—in case you find it."

"It wouldn't do much good. The captain doesn't believe in the treasure."

Frank Low looked uneasy.

"I'll tell you what I am afraid of, Master Guy," he said.

"Go on, Frank."

"I am afraid some day when you are on the island he will set sail without you."

Guy looked startled, as he well might, at this suggestion.

"He wouldn't dare do that," he replied.

"I don't know. I believe he would dare to do anything. Besides——"

"Well, Frank," said Guy, seeing that he hesitated.

"Besides, I don't think the captain is wholly responsible for what he does."

"Why do you think that?" asked Guy, quickly.

"From the way he behaves. Sometimes he paces up and down the deck, muttering to himself. I shouldn't be surprised if he were off his base."

"You mean that he is crazy?"

"It looks to me like that. I had an uncle who was affected in the same way. He used to go up and down through the village, muttering, and took very little notice of anyone he met when he had the fit on him. After a while he got worse, and at last had to be carried to an asylum."

"Then you think that with the fit upon him, the

captain might sail away and leave me and my two friends on the island?"

"That is what I am afraid of."

"Thank you for putting me on my guard, Frank. "I will think over what you have said and try to prepare for it."

"I don't see how you can."

"I must still continue my visits to the island, whatever risk I run; that is due to my employer. But, should the worst happen, you can do something for me."

"I will do anything for you, Master Guy," said the young sailor, earnestly.

"Then, Frank, if the captain treacherously deserts us, and keeps on his course to Bombay, as soon as the Osprey arrives there I want you to call on Mr. Saunders, my employer, and let him know where I am. He will probably have the captain arrested, and will send the Osprey or some other vessel to our help."

"But you will be left to starve!"

"I don't fear that. There are natural fruits on the island, and animals that we can kill for food. I think that we can get along as Robinson Crusoe did."

"I will remember what you have told me, Master Guy, but I hope there will be no need to do it."

"I trust, too, that the necessity will not arise."

"Don't you think you had better give up your search, Master Guy, considering how much opposition there is to it?"

"No, Frank," said Guy, firmly. "You must remember that I am in the employ of Mr. Saunders, and represent his interests. I will prove faithful to him, whatever happens."

Frank Low looked perplexed and uneasy. He had become anxious, and being warmly attached to Guy, who treated him as a friend and an equal, thought chiefly of his safety.

CHAPTER XXXII

LUKE CLARK MAKES A DISCOVERY

THE fear excited by Frank Low's communication made Guy more anxious than ever to complete his work upon the island as soon as possible. Captain Richmond's evident hostility and desire to get away excited daily apprehension.

Guy had no desire to repeat the experience of Robinson Crusoe. It would doubtless be romantic, but he preferred to read romances rather than enact them.

Guy's feelings were shared by his two companions.

"Whenever I come to the island I pray that it may be for the last time," said Abner Titcomb. "With such a man as Captain Richmond in command of the Osprey I never feel safe."

"I feel so, too," added Luke Clark.

A new alarm seized Guy. Would his companions refuse to persevere in the quest?

He had no doubt of their general loyalty, but

both had families in far-away Maine, and their affections made them timid.

Guy himself had a father and friends in America, and he, too, shrank from the fate which would be his if the captain should take a fancy to sail away and leave them on the island.

It was certainly a strange and momentous responsibility that rested upon this American boy of but seventeen years. Here were two men of middle age under his direction. He had hired them for a special service, but he could not command them to remain faithful in the face of the danger which they all dreaded.

"Don't you think, Mr. Titcomb," said Guy, on the second morning after his conversation with Frank Low, "that we had better work more systematically?"

"What do you mean, Guy?"

"I will tell you. Hitherto we have kept together. Would it not be well to separate and go in different directions, meeting, say, at four o'clock? It would not be so pleasant, but I think it would multiply our chances of success."

"I am ready for any plan that will have that result. Do you know, I dreamed of my wife and children last night?"

"That must have been pleasant."

"No; for in my dream one of the children seemed to be very sick with a fever. I could not help thinking of what might happen during our protracted absence."

Abner Titcomb spoke gravely, and it was easy to see that the dream had made a deep impression upon him. Not only upon him, but upon Luke Clark, to whom the same thought seemed to have come.

"If Captain Grover were in command of the Osprey, we wouldn't feel so anxious or hurried," he said.

"No; but we have a very different man in command."

"True; but he would not have the courage to sail away and leave us in the lurch."

"Suppose, however, that Frank Low's conjecture is correct, and the man is insane?"

"Then, of course, he would be capable of anything," said Luke Clark.

"Don't let us brood over a danger which perhaps does not exist," interrupted Guy. "Rather let us consult together how to succeed."

It was decided to adopt Guy's suggestion and separate, each of the three taking a different route, and meeting again at four o'clock. It was felt by all that there was no time to be lost.

It may be as well to explain here that each of the three was provided with a watch, so that there would be no difficulty about meeting at any hour agreed upon.

The first day on which this arrangement was carried out proved to be a long one for each member of the party. Previously they were able to converse together, and this made the time slip by more rapidly.

They met on the hill, at the place where they had found the seat already referred to.

Guy and Titcomb were the first to arrive.

"Well, Abner, what success?" asked Guy.

"None at all. I presume you have no better news to report."

"No."

"I wonder whether your clue—about the trees in the shape of a cross—can be depended upon?"

"If not, I shall have absolutely nothing to guide me."

"Then let us trust that it is reliable. Well, I scanned closely every clump of trees in my wanderings, and saw nothing that answered the description."

"Let us hope that Luke was more fortunate."

Five minutes later Luke Clark made his appearance, coming from the west. There was an un-

usual expression upon his face that made Guy hopeful.

"Well, Luke," he said, "have you discovered anything?"

"Yes," answered Clark.

"What is it?" asked Guy, eagerly. "Not the cross?"

"No, not the cross. This is what I found."

He drew from his pocket a small volume, looking like an account book. The cover bore the marks of exposure. It had evidently been out in the rain, but the inside pages were full of writing which was still legible.

"The book must have been left here by one of the pirates," said Guy.

"No; not by one of the pirates, but by an unfortunate man who met the fate that we have all been dreading."

"What do you mean, Luke?"

"I mean that the man who wrote the account which you will find in this book was left here purposely by a ship captain who had a grudge against him. So much I have gathered from the pages that I have read."

"Sit down and read it to us. It is nearly two hours before we shall have to be on the beach to meet the boat."

The handwriting was plain and legible, though a lead pencil had been employed. It looked very much like a schoolboy's hand, the letters being round and well formed. The writer had evidently written slowly and deliberately.

The reading was listened to with deep interest. The story ran thus:

"I wonder whether anyone will ever read these lines which I pen in my despair. I hope so, though when they are read I shall be beyond human help. Not that I am sick. I am well in body, but so unhappy that I have made up my mind when this record is completed to throw myself into the sea and end my captivity in the only way that seems practicable.

Four years I have lived on this island in the completest solitude. Every day I have made a notch on a tree, which I selected for the purpose, as it was the only way of keeping tally of the time. The seasons are so much alike that the changes are not sufficient to be a guide to me.

I have just been counting the notches I have made, and I find them to number fourteen hundred and sixty. That makes exactly four years, not making account of the extra day for leap year.

But I must not make my preface too long. Let

me say, then, that in the year 187— I set sail from Liverpool for Bombay, rating as an ordinary seaman. I had made other voyages, for I have been a sailor, man and boy, for twenty years, but I had no presentiment that this was to be the last and most disastrous.

We had a good captain, a man who understood his business, strict, and yet kind. I always liked him, and got on well with him. I may say that I never sailed under a captain whom I more highly respected. His name was Clark——”

“Your name, Luke,” suggested Guy. “I don’t understand how, under such a captain, the poor fellow could have come to grief.”

“You will see further on.”

Luke Clark continued reading:

“The mate, however, was a different man, arrogant, rough, and domineering. None of us liked him. He would have misused the sailors had the captain allowed, but Captain Clark, though a mild and good-tempered man, was one who did not permit his authority to be questioned or disputed. More than once, when the mate was on the point of abusing one of us sailors, the captain interfered and sternly reprimanded him.

Of course, under these circumstances, the mate could not do the harm or indulge in the brutality to which his nature impelled him. This was fortunate for me, for by ill luck I had managed to incur his special ill will. Once he was on the point of striking me to the deck when Captain Clark interfered.

The mate never forgot this. He was humiliated, for the captain had reproved him sharply in the presence of some of the crew. He often looked at me in a manner which boded me no good. Still I did not feel anxious, for I knew that Captain Clark was just and humane, and would not tolerate any abuse on the part of the mate.

But I could not foresee the future. I did not dream what misfortune was in store for us. We were nearing Madagascar, when the captain fell sick of some mysterious disorder, and in the space of two days was dead.

So it chanced that we sailors lost our best friend, and John Richmond became captain in his place."

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE END OF JOHN WOLF'S NARRATIVE

THE three looked at each other in amazement.

"John Richmond!" repeated Guy. "It is very strange. But read on. I think I can guess how he acted."

Luke Clark proceeded with the manuscript.

"After the mate became captain, things changed for the sailors. Before, we had a strict disciplinarian, but a kindly one. No sailor who did his duty had anything to complain of. After that we were in charge of a tyrant. Captain Richmond, for this was his title now, did not forget his experiences or animosities as mate. There were several whom he disliked, but I think he hated me the most. He would have abused me, but I knew his feelings, and did not give him a chance.

I think he disliked me all the more on that account. I could see, by the way he looked at me at times, what hatred for me there was in his heart.

I think he disliked me the more because, though only a common seaman, I had had a fine education, and he knew it. In that respect I was his superior.

Well, about this time there came a storm. It was a very violent storm, unusual in that latitude, and it drove us out of our course very considerably. Instead of trying to get into the regular route for vessels bound to Bombay, Captain Richmond kept the ship in a northeasterly course till we struck the Agalegas Islands.

What could be his reason I did not comprehend, but I soon understood only too well. He went on shore, taking myself and another of the crew with him. We kept on till we reached the woods. Then the captain took my companion with him, and bade me remain where I was on some pretext. He was to come for me later on.

I waited unsuspectingly till I got tired. Then I ascended the hill, and to my dismay saw the *Miranda*—that was the name of our vessel—under full sail, bearing out to sea. In an instant the terrible truth flashed upon me. I had been left, helpless and alone, on this unknown island, with very little chance of ever leaving it, for it was not in the path of trading vessels.

I was almost frantic when I realized what a

fearful fate was reserved for me. I shrieked, I shook my fist at the receding vessel. I called down curses on the head of the fiend who had taken upon me this terrible revenge, or rather had inflicted upon me this unprovoked punishment, for I had done nothing to incur his hostility.

But do what I would I could not recall the Miranda. What excuse the captain made for my absence I do not know; but though I had friends on board, there was no one who would dare take my part, or call him to account for his action.

Four years have passed since then. They have been like forty. I have not starved, for the berries and fruits which the island affords, together with the fish I have been able to catch, have sustained me. But there was no one with whom I could hold converse—no one to whom I could speak, so it is a wonder I have not forgotten my native tongue.

For a time I bore up, sustained by the hope that some vessel would touch at the island and carry me back to England. In the four years I have seen two ships, but I was unable to attract the attention of anyone on board.

So hope died at last, and I have come to the conclusion that for me there is no release, no way of escape. I am forty-two years of age. Under

ordinary circumstances I might hope to live thirty years longer. But what would life be on this island, cut off from human companionship? I would rather end it all, and have decided to do so. When I have completed this record I shall go to a cliff on the northern shore of the island, and fling myself into the sea. Whether any eye will read these lines, I cannot tell. I hope so. I hope that someone will learn the perfidious and cruel conduct of John Richmond, and pity his poor victim.

JOHN WOLF."

When the story had been read the three looked at one another in stupefaction.

"It is terrible," said Guy. "Why is it that such things are permitted?"

"Don't you think, Guy, that this partly explains Captain Richmond's reluctance to stay here?" asked Abner Titcomb.

"Yes," answered Guy, quickly. "I had not thought of that, but it is probably the case."

"A man who would be capable of wronging a poor sailor like John Wolf, and dooming him to a hopeless captivity, is quite capable of repeating the atrocious act," observed Luke Clark, significantly.

"Yes," said Titcomb, gravely. "I agree with

you. It will be well for us to find that treasure as soon as possible. We run a risk every time we come here."

Luke Clark had been turning over the leaves of the memorandum book from which he had read the sailor's story.

"There is something more," he said; "a post-script. It may be important. I will read it."

This was what he read:

"I may as well record here an important discovery I chanced to make one day. It is of no use to me, but it may benefit the persons into whose hands this book may fall. At the north end of the island, about two hundred feet from the edge of the bluff, there is a group of trees arranged singularly in the shape of a cross. Between the second and third trees, at about eighteen inches from the surface, is a sailor's chest, full of gold, silver, and jewels. I cannot estimate the value, but it must be large. I fancy it was hidden here by pirates. It must have been forgotten, however, for no one has visited it since I have been on this island.

If I could only get away, this treasure would make me rich. It is a tantalizing thought. As I am situated it is of no earthly use to me. Some time—it may be years hence—it will be found by

some lucky person, perhaps by the one who reads this account, and it will make him rich. Such good fortune is not for me. If I could only escape from this island, which, charming as it is, I have learned to detest, I would be willing to live in abject poverty for the rest of my life. Wealth is far from my thoughts——”

“Is that all?” asked Guy, when Luke Clark stopped reading.

“Yes.”

“It is indeed strange. I thought the group of trees must be in the wood somewhere. We have been on the wrong scent.”

“But we have succeeded at last. Let us be thankful for that. We can probably finish up our work in a day or two, and then—we can go home.”

“We must go to Bombay first.”

“Yes. We can stand that, since the delay will be brief.”

“Shall we tell Captain Richmond that we have succeeded?” asked Luke.

“Perhaps it will be well to drop a hint that we are on the point of making a discovery. That will encourage him, and insure his waiting. It is not well to tell him too much.”

"It is time to go down to the beach. Only one day more!"

The three descended the hill, and reached the beach about five o'clock.

They were seen from the ship, and the boat was sent for them.

"Well," said the captain, with his usual sneer, as they climbed on deck, "have you discovered the mare's nest?"

The remark was addressed to Guy.

"I have reason to think we shall locate the treasure to-morrow, Captain Richmond."

"What ground have you for that assertion?" asked the captain, quickly.

"Excuse my explaining now, but I have good reasons for my belief."

Captain Richmond scanned Guy closely, being surprised by his confident tone.

Guy's face was bright and cheerful, and confirmed his words. He thought that the captain would question him further, but the commander only looked thoughtful, and turning on his heel without a word went down to his cabin.

"I wish I could read his thoughts," Guy said to himself. "He doesn't seem glad that I am likely to succeed. He even looks as if he were disappointed."

"Very likely. He's a strange man, and a disagreeable one."

Later in the evening, say about nine o'clock, Abner Titcomb and Luke Clark were leaning over the side, talking, as was natural, of the stirring events of the day, when the captain passed, neither of them being aware of his nearness.

There was one word which caught his attention. It was the name Miranda.

He stopped short, and there was a startled look on his face.

"Did I hear the name Miranda?" he asked, quickly.

"Yes," answered Titcomb, conscious of his imprudence.

The captain turned away, but he looked suspicious and agitated, and began to mutter to himself, looking darkly from time to time at the two men.

"Does he suspect anything, do you think?" asked Titcomb.

"No; I don't think so."

"All the same, I wish that I had kept my tongue between my teeth."

CHAPTER XXXIV

HOW SUCCESS BECAME FAILURE

THE next morning, when Guy and his two companions started for the island, their faces were bright with hope and expectation. They felt that success was at hand.

They never doubted the truth of the statement which they had read in John Wolf's memorandum book. There had been times when they had been despondent, but all fear of failure was now removed.

They were too much absorbed in their own thoughts to notice the rather remarkable demeanor of the captain, who stood on the deck, silent and watchful, while his three passengers were taking their places in the boat.

They were provided with a pickaxe and a shovel. These Guy had brought with him from home, in the hope that they would be required in unearthing the treasure of which he was in search.

Hitherto they had not carried these implements on their daily trips to the island, but the time had now come when they would be of use.

Captain John Richmond smiled cynically as he watched the boat lowered and the three explorers entering it. Probably no one of the sailors noticed his expression except Frank Low, on whom it produced a feeling of uneasiness.

"I wonder what the captain's thinking about," he said to himself.

Captain Richmond stood silent and thoughtful till he saw the party land on the island beach. Then he waited quietly till the boat returned.

He waited longer, and through the glass saw Guy and his companions plunge into the forest.

Then he called the mate, and gave him an order which was received with intense astonishment.

"Surely, Captain Richmond," he said, "you are not in earnest!"

"Mr. Forbush," said the captain, sternly, "I'll thank you not to question my orders."

"But, Captain Richmond, you are surely not going to put out to sea, leaving your three passengers on the island!"

"That is just what I am going to do," said the captain, with an oath.

"But, sir——"

"Do you understand, Mr. Forbush, that I am the captain of this vessel?"

"Yes, sir."

"I understand my business, and I don't choose to have my orders questioned."

"But, sir, this is monstrous!" protested the mate.

"Another word, sir, and I will put you in irons!"

The mate looked at the captain, and saw that he was almost beside himself with rage. Evidently he was in no condition to be expostulated with.

It seemed necessary to give in to him for the present, and the mate called the boatswain to pipe the crew to duty.

There was more than one perplexed and wondering face as the sailors prepared the ship for setting sail. They all asked themselves what it meant, and whether the three men on the island were to be left behind.

But no one dared to ask the captain, who, stern and resolute, kept his place on deck, and personally saw that his orders were carried out. Perhaps the one who felt the deepest grief and dismay was Frank Low, who saw that what he had most feared was about to take place.

He knew, too—for Guy had got a chance to tell him—that the scheme was all but discovered, and that this would be the last day upon the island.

Poor Frank! Unwillingly enough he was compelled to take his part in getting the ship ready for a start.

Had he dared, he would have made a personal protest to the captain, but he knew that while this would bring swift punishment to him it would do his friends no good. So with a perplexed brow and sinking heart he bore his part, and kept silence till the mate chanced to be standing near him. Then he felt he must speak.

"Mr. Forbush," he said, "what does this mean? Are we going to desert Guy Fenwick and his men?"

It was a breach of discipline to say as much as this, but he knew that the mate felt kindly toward him and toward Guy.

"Heaven only knows," replied the mate, in a low voice. "I have done the best I could to prevent him, but the captain won't hear a word."

"They will die!" said Frank, in a faltering voice.

"Not a word more now; the captain is coming!"

Captain Richmond came up, looking stern and forbidding, and watched with a lynx-like glance all that was going on.

The mate determined to make one more remonstrance.

"Captain Richmond," he said, "does Guy Fenwick know of your intention of putting to sea?"

The captain looked as if he were about to in-

dulge in a burst of furious anger, but he restrained himself, with a sudden thought.

"Yes," he said, "he understands. We are coming back for him," he added, after a pause.

Mr. Forbush looked skeptical. He did not believe a word of this.

He was about to speak again when the captain added, peremptorily: "I wish to hear no more on this subject, Mr. Forbush. I know what I am about."

After this it would not do even for the mate to say more.

Still, the latter regarded the captain fixedly, which appeared to anger him.

"Don't look at me in that way, Mr. Forbush!" roared the captain. "I repeat that I know what I am about!"

"I am glad you do, sir," said the mate, coolly.

Captain Richmond glared at him, but did not reply.

Within an hour the Osprey, under full sail, for there was a good breeze, was speeding away from the island.

We must now follow Guy and his two friends, who had gone ashore in high spirits, feeling that success was within their grasp. They did not loiter on their way, but made all haste to reach that part

of the island indicated as the repository of the treasure.

As they walked they talked cheerfully and hopefully of the future.

"Guy," said Abner, "you are entitled to credit for your enterprise and pluck. It isn't many boys of your age that would have done so much."

"I don't know about that, Abner," said Guy, modestly; "but I have done the best I could."

"And you will be well paid."

"I hope so. Not so much for my own sake as my father's. I want to make his latter days comfortable."

"Why, he isn't so old! He's only about ten years older than I am."

"True; but you know as soon as a minister has passed middle life some are anxious to turn him off and put a younger man in his place."

"Is that the case in Bayport?"

"Yes. There is one of the congregation—Deacon Crane—who is anxious to get rid of him. I don't think there are many who agree with him, but I know he will do all he can to bring about a change."

"It's a lucky thing Luke came across that memorandum book. I don't believe we should any of

us have thought of going to the other end of the island."

"It would have been a good while, probably, before we did."

"And Captain Richmond would have got tired of waiting. Did you drop him a hint that we were on the right track?"

"Yes; but I don't believe he put any faith in my words."

"He will have to believe it when we carry the treasure on board."

At length, following the directions of Wolf, the unfortunate sailor, they reached the locality specified.

There stood the six trees, arranged in the shape of a cross. There were no other trees within two hundred feet, and this made them conspicuous.

"If we had ever come this way we could not have failed to discover them," said Titcomb; "and after all, the pirates were wise to select this place, rather than one in the heart of the woods."

They lost no time in digging between the second and third trees, according to directions.

"I hope no one has been here before," said Luke Clark, between the strokes of his pickaxe.

"There was no one to come here except John Wolf, and he would have had no object in it."

In a very short time Abner Titcomb's pickaxe struck something hard.

"That's the chest, I surmise," he said.

The three redoubled their efforts, and, sure enough, they soon laid bare the chest which for so many years had been buried in its secret hiding place.

It proved to be locked, but by good luck Guy, who had with him the key of his uncle's chest in the attic of his home in Bayport, was able to open it.

The sight dazzled them. There were vases filled with gold and silver coin, and three or four wallets stuffed with bank bills, besides watches—there looked to be fifty or sixty of these—and jewelry.

"Well! well! This is a find!" said Abner Titcomb. "You are rich for life, Guy!"

Guy's face flushed with pride and joy.

"Mr. Saunders will be satisfied, I think," he said, simply. "The question is now, how shall we get the chest to the beach?"

"I think we shall have to wait till to-morrow. I doubt if we can carry it so far. We can bring some of the sailors with us to help."

"Won't there be a risk in leaving it?"

"There is no one on the island. Still, we had

better cover it up and get back to the beach, although it is yet early."

It was at least four miles to the beach. When they arrived there their hearts were filled with dismay, *for looking out to sea, they could see nothing of the Osprey!* She had mysteriously disappeared.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE CRUISE OF THE OSPREY

GUY and his two companions looked at one another, with pale faces and sinking hearts.

"What does it mean?" Guy faltered.

"It means," said Abner, hoarsely, "that that fiend, Captain Richmond, has served us as he did the poor sailor, John Wolf."

"But he can't have gone away for good! He will come back!"

Guy spoke hopefully, but he did not himself believe what he said.

"Just as we had succeeded, too!"

"If we had only made the discovery yesterday; but now it is too late!"

"Boys," said Abner Titcomb, "let us sit down and discuss our position as calmly as we can. If there is any favorable side to it let us try to find it."

"But is there any?" sighed Luke Clark.

"Yes; to begin with, we sha'n't starve. The

products of the island will sustain us, as they did John Wolf."

"But life won't be worth sustaining if we have to live as he did. We may be driven, like him, to throw ourselves into the sea."

"He was alone, and there are three of us. Besides, our fate will be known to the whole ship's crew."

"I don't understand why the mate permitted it."

"No doubt he protested, but what could he do? In a conflict of authority between the captain and the mate the latter must go to the wall."

"Then what hope is there?"

"As soon as the ship reaches Bombay someone on board will notify Mr. Saunders of what has happened."

"Frank Low would do that, if there were no one else," said Guy, beginning to be hopeful.

"Yes; and he would send for us."

"But weeks must pass before help can arrive."

"True; and they will seem more like months; but I am sure all will come right in the end."

"Meanwhile," said Guy, recovering in a measure from his depression, "we must adapt ourselves to circumstances, and make ourselves as comfortable as we can."

"Let us begin, then, by taking lunch. We have been so occupied with the treasure that we have forgotten to eat."

Meanwhile the Osprey was speeding from the island, and was already fifty miles away. Everyone on board, even to the humblest sailor, looked grave. Everyone was thinking of poor Guy and his companions on their island prison.

Guy was a general favorite, partly on account of his good looks, partly on account of his bright, kindly ways, and indignation against the captain on account of his cruel and inhuman course was general and intense.

When the time came for dinner, the captain sat down to it alone. Mr. Forbush, the mate, excused himself on the plea that he had no appetite.

Captain Richmond was angry, for he penetrated the mate's objection to sitting down with him.

"Just as you please, Mr. Forbush," he said, in a tone of irritation, "but you are acting very foolishly."

"You may regard it in that light, if you choose, Captain Richmond," returned the mate, coldly.

"Have you anything to say to me?" asked the captain, defiantly.

"I have already expressed my opinion of your course," said Forbush, frigidly.

"I know what I am about," blustered the captain.

"You have said that before. I can only repeat that I am glad of it."

"Perhaps you mean to dispute my authority," said the captain, in a quarrelsome tone.

"Wait till I do, sir."

Captain Richmond swore softly to himself, and eyed the mate with a glance far from friendly.

So the day passed, and another dawned.

Captain Richmond was unusually irritable. He saw that all on board looked at him askance. The sailors obeyed him, so that he had no excuse for complaint, but there was an utter absence of cordiality, and he was in the position of a social outcast who is "sent to Coventry."

This is not a pleasant position for anyone, least of all for an arrogant and ill-tempered man like Captain Richmond. While it cannot be said that he regretted his inhuman conduct, he was angry at the unpopularity he had acquired through it.

Besides, he could not doubt that it would be reported at Bombay, and the matter perhaps brought to the attention of the American consul. Whenever he thought of this he felt vaguely un-

comfortable, but he was too self-willed to retrace his course and thus admit himself to be in the wrong.

"Where is all this going to end, Mr. Forbush?" asked the boatswain one day. "Are those poor fellows to be left to their fate?"

"No," answered the mate, firmly. "I shall report the matter when we reach Bombay, and I will agree to head an expedition for their relief."

"But how will they get along meanwhile? Won't they starve?"

"No. Titcomb told me that the island produced enough to sustain life."

"Will not Captain Richmond be punished?"

"I earnestly hope so. If my representations will effect it, he will lose his command."

"The man must be a fiend."

"He is getting worse and worse. He does not treat me with ordinary civility, and he is beginning to abuse the men. He has not a pleasant word for anyone."

It was indeed true that Captain Richmond was becoming more despotic and tyrannical than ever. On the least provocation he would fell a seaman to the deck or launch a volley of curses at him.

As a consequence, there were more angry looks than ever directed toward him as he paced the deck

with hasty strides, shaking his head, and muttering words that could not be understood.

One day he treated with unusual brutality the Italian sailor already referred to, Guido Leporelli.

Guido was a short man, not much over five feet in height, and the captain probably regarded him with contempt, as one whom it would be safe to bully. In personal strength, Leporelli was as a mere child compared to the robust captain, but he had his share of the fiery and revengeful spirit that characterizes a large number of his countrymen.

On this day the mate caught the glance with which he regarded the captain. It made him shudder.

"I should not like to make an enemy of Leporelli," he said to himself. "I think he means mischief."

It was in his mind to warn Captain Richmond of his danger, but he reflected that, should he do so, it would bring upon the Italian worse treatment than ever, and he was not willing to run this risk.

"The captain must take his chances," he decided.

It was on the morning of the ninth day after leaving the island that Captain Richmond, in pacing the deck, came upon Leporelli. The Italian

was moving at a slow pace, for he had a rheumatic affection in his left leg.

"Move faster, you lazy hound!" said the captain, roughly, and he dealt the little Italian a cruel blow in the face.

The eyes of Guido Leporelli blazed with wrath. With a smothered ejaculation in his native tongue he pulled out a murderous-looking knife, which he had been carrying for several days, and in a flash it was buried in the breast of the burly captain.

Captain Richmond fell forward, dying almost instantly, for the knife had penetrated his heart.

A smile of supreme satisfaction overspread the Italian's face as he saw his brutal tormentor dead at his feet.

"I am avenged!" he cried. "Now I am ready to die!"

With the blood-stained knife still in his hand he ran to the edge of the vessel and sprang into the sea.

No one tried to prevent him, and no one tried to rescue him. His life was forfeited by his act, and the mate, who was now bending over the captain, felt that his self-punishment was the speediest settlement of a troublesome complication.

The captain was raised and carried to his cabin. Restoratives were applied, but in vain. It soon

became evident that the Italian's thrust was fatal. Death had been instantaneous.

There was a frown on the captain's face that made it repellent, yet natural, for his countenance in life had been seldom without it.

Mr. Forbush assumed command, as his position required. The captain's body was sewed up in sailcloth and committed to the deep, the ex-mate reading the burial service.

Then the crew were summoned to meet the new captain.

"Men," said Captain Forbush, "the captain's death has made me your commander."

There was an attempt at applause, but with a wave of his hand Mr. Forbush stopped it.

"I shall try to deserve your confidence and good will," he continued. "Of the dead let us think and speak only in pity. He had his faults, but he has been terribly punished. It is proper for me to state, as I take command, that I shall immediately reverse the ship's course and return to the island for Guy Fenwick and his two companions."

Then there was a burst of approving cheers which Captain Forbush did not check.

CHAPTER XXXVI

RESCUED

MEANWHILE, the three prisoners on the island were passing their time dismally enough. There was actually nothing for them to do except to seek enough of the produce of the island to sustain life.

This they were able to do, but they soon tired of their monotonous bill of fare.

"I would give something for a good New England breakfast," said Abner Titcomb, one morning.

"Baked beans and brown bread?" suggested Guy, with a smile.

"Yes; or fishcakes, rolls, and coffee—anything substantial, instead of these sweet, cloying fruits."

"I think I agree with you, Abner," said Guy.

"I am sure I do," added Luke Clark.

It may seem strange that they had never made a second visit to the place where the treasure was concealed; but it had lost its attractions for them.

They did not even speculate as to its value. It was absolutely worthless to them in their present condition.

They spent most of their time on the summit of the hill, looking out to sea in search of a ship. They felt that the Osprey would be sent back for them, but it was long to wait. If they could get off sooner, so much the better.

Abner Titcomb had a marine glass with him, and this helped them.

Once with his glass he espied a ship, a mere speck in the distance, and there was hope that it would come nearer the island.

They tried to signal it, but it was too far away, and no heed was paid to the white sailcloth that they hoisted above the hill on a branch of a tree. This was a severe disappointment.

"John Wolf was here four years without signalling a sail," said Luke Clark, in a tone of discouragement. "There seems to be little hope for us."

So day followed day, and each one seemed longer than the last.

They liked to sit and talk of their New England homes, and all that made them attractive. They tried to fancy how those who were dear to them were occupied.

"My father is writing his sermon for Sunday," Guy would say on a Saturday morning. "What would he think if he could know where I am?"

"It is well he doesn't know, since he could do you no good," rejoined Titcomb.

"Yes; it would only make the dear old man unhappy. I don't want him to know it till he also knows that I am safe."

"How long is it since we were left here?" asked Luke Clark. "Have you kept the record?"

"Yes, this is the seventeenth day."

"And we are still alive! Well that's a comfort, any way."

Abner Titcomb had been using his glass.

"Boys!" he said, suddenly, in a tone of excitement, "I see a sail!"

"Where?" exclaimed Guy and Luke Clark together.

Titcomb pointed in a direction east by south.

"Look again! Notice if it seems to be approaching the island."

There was silence for five minutes.

"Yes," he said, "it seems to be coming toward us. Here, Guy, your eyes are better than mine; take the glass, and see whether I am right."

Guy took the glass and turned it in the direction of the ship.

"Abner! Luke!" he said, in a tremulous voice. "I think it looks like the Osprey."

"Give me the glass—quick!" said Luke.

He took a long look seaward.

"Well, well! What do you make out?" asked Abner.

"I think Guy is right. It does look like the Osprey."

"But it can't be! There has not been time for her to go to Bombay and return."

This was evident, and they felt that they could not be correct.

But half an hour later it was clear that the ship was steering for the island. An hour later all were sure that it was the Osprey.

"Let us raise our signal and then go down to the beach," said Guy.

His suggestion was followed. Leaving the signal on the summit of the hill, they made their way downward, through the belt of woods, to the shore.

Still one or another looked through the glass until doubt became certainty, and the familiar form of the Osprey was clearly to be seen.

"Thank God!" said Titcomb, fervently.

No sooner was the Osprey near enough than a boat was lowered. Among those it bore were Forbush and Frank Low.

As they landed, the three prisoners rushed joyfully to greet them.

"Then Captain Richmond relented?" said Guy.
"He repented of his inhuman course?"

"Captain Richmond is dead," said Frank Low, gravely. "Mr. Forbush is now captain."

"But how did he die? Was he stricken with disease?"

"He fell a victim to his brutality. He was stabbed to the heart by Leporelli, whom he had abused."

It was Captain Forbush who said this.

"As soon as I took command I ordered the ship's course to be reversed, and I came here in search of you. I will give you a reasonable time to find the treasure."

"Captain Forbush, *the treasure is found!*" said Guy. "To-morrow I will ask you to lend me the assistance of two of your sailors to carry it on board the Osprey."

"You shall have it," said the captain, promptly.
"I congratulate you, Guy, on your success."

CHAPTER XXXVII

DIVIDING THE TREASURE

JOHN SAUNDERS sat in his office in Bombay. Before him lay a letter from his New York correspondent, Gilbert Frazer.

It ran thus:

I have had a call from a boy of sixteen, Guy Fenwick, who showed credentials from you, and appears to have been intrusted with an extraordinary commission. I complied with your instructions and supplied him with the money he called for, as per account inclosed. I hope I have done right. It seemed singular to me that you should have employed as your confidential agent a boy so young. I hope you will excuse the liberty I take in referring to this.

There was more of the same tenor.

Mr. Saunders read the note with a complacent smile.

"I have no doubt Frazer was very much sur-

prised," he said to himself. "Indeed, I should myself have been surprised had anyone told me a year since that I would have so far trusted so young an agent. But Guy Fenwick is an extraordinary boy, and I still feel that I have made no mistake.

"To be sure," he added, after a pause, "this expedition in search of the pirates' treasure may be foolish, but even on that I reserve my decision. I shall be interested to hear how Guy makes out."

He was interrupted by the opening of the office door and the sudden entrance of the boy who had been occupying his thoughts.

"Guy Fenwick!" he exclaimed, in a tone of evident pleasure.

"Yes, Mr. Saunders," said Guy, with a smile. "Didn't you expect to see me again?"

"Not so soon. What have you to report? Did you find the island?"

"Yes, sir; and that was not all."

"You don't mean to say that you have found the treasure?"

"Yes, I do. It is at the door, in charge of three men, and with your permission I will have it brought in."

Without waiting for an answer Guy gave a signal, and three strong men carried in the sailor's

chest which had been unearthed at the island. Guy dismissed the men, and then, unlocking the chest, threw it open, disclosing the treasure.

The merchant was dazzled.

"This is wonderful!" he ejaculated.

"Now, Mr. Saunders," said Guy, "I have fulfilled my part of the contract. I will leave the treasure with you."

"I will have it appraised and render an account to you, Guy. You will dine with me?"

"Thank you, sir; but in the meantime, as I have been confined so long on shipboard, I will go out and take a walk."

It was three days before the examination and appraisal were completed. Then Mr. Saunders announced to his young agent that the value of the treasure was fifty thousand pounds, or two hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

"Of this," he said, "your share is one-half, or one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars."

"But, sir, you advanced me a thousand pounds!"

"I shall make no account of that. You deserve a full half as a reward for your energy and enterprise."

"And I am really worth over a hundred thousand dollars?" said Guy, hardly able to realize his good fortune.

"Yes; and if you choose to stay with me I will employ you at a liberal salary."

"Thank you, Mr. Saunders; but I would like a year's vacation. I want to go home and gladden my father with the good news."

"Certainly. That is only reasonable."

The Osprey, on its return voyage, carried Guy and his two assistants as passengers.

He divided ten thousand dollars between Abner Titcomb, Luke Clark, and Captain Forbush, feeling that he was under special obligations to all three, and that he would still be left as rich as he could reasonably desire.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

BACK IN BAYPORT

IN Bayport, things were moving on as usual. From week to week the Rev. Mr. Fenwick appeared in the pulpit of the village church, and officiated to the satisfaction of all but a small minority of the parish.

For there were a few malcontents, headed by Deacon Crane, who had not yet lost the hope of seeing the pulpit filled by his cousin, who, not being popular, had been unemployed more than half the time during the past year.

The deacon went about and dropped disparaging remarks about Mr. Fenwick, but they did not bear fruit. To his chagrin, he found that very few cared for a change.

He was perplexed, but none the less determined to bring about his desires.

To facilitate his purpose, he informed the treasurer of the parish that he should reduce by one-half his subscription to the parish expenses.

"Why is this, Deacon Crane?" asked the treasurer. "Are you getting poor?"

"No, Brother Jones; but I ain't exactly satisfied with our pastor."

"Why not?"

"I don't seem to get much spiritooal refreshment from his sermons."

"The rest of the congregation do, and they are to be considered."

The deacon had nothing to say in reply, but he stayed at home the next Sunday.

One reason for his dissatisfaction came from a letter he had received from his clerical relative, asking for the loan of one hundred dollars.

"I can't lend you the money," he replied; "but if I can get the parish to dismiss Mr. Fenwick, I will try to get you in his place."

It was while the deacon was exercised in this way that his son Noah ran into the store one afternoon and exclaimed: "Who do you think has just gone past the store?"

"You had better tell me, Noah. I can't waste my time in guessing."

"It was the minister's son, Guy."

Deacon Crane pricked up his ears.

"How did he look?"

"Pretty fair."

"He's probably lost his place, and come home to live on his father."

"Shouldn't be a bit surprised, dad."

"Noah," said the deacon, much shocked, "never call me dad again! It isn't respectful!"

"All right, father. You'd better call at the minister's and find out what brings Guy home this time."

"I think I may have occasion to call this evening," replied the deacon.

Meanwhile we will follow Guy home.

His father was overjoyed to see his son back again, for he was deeply attached to his only child.

After the first greetings were over, Guy said: "You don't ask me whether I am still at work for Mr. Saunders."

"I thought you would tell me in due time, Guy. Now I can only think with joy of your return."

"Well, father, I mean to stay at home, or at least near home, for a year. Mr. Saunders has given me a vacation of twelve months."

"Doubtless, my son, you can find some employment here, since he will not need you for a year."

Guy smiled.

"There is no reason to worry about that, father," he said. "How are you getting on with Deacon Crane?"

"I think, Guy, he would prefer to have a younger man in my place. It makes me feel that I am growing old."

"Pooh, father! You are only fifty-two. But, tell me, did you not at one time think of writing a commentary on the Gospels?"

"Yes, Guy; but my sermon writing takes all my time."

"Then why not apply to the parish to give you a young man as a colleague?"

"The parish cannot afford to pay two salaries."

"Then you might offer to serve as senior pastor without salary."

"But, Guy, how am I to live?"

"What salary does the parish pay you now?"

"A thousand dollars."

"Very well, father, ask for an assistant, and I will pay you twelve hundred dollars a year."

"I suppose you are joking, Guy."

"Not at all. I am in earnest."

"But where are you to get the money?" asked Mr. Fenwick, looking at his son in bewilderment.

"I must tell you, father, that I am worth over a hundred thousand dollars."

"If you had not always been truthful, Guy, I should think that you were trying to deceive me."

Then Guy explained. The explanation was, to

his father, a marvelous one, and he had many questions to ask.

"Now, father," Guy concluded, "I will alter the terms of my proposal. I will make over to you outright the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars, and you can invest it so as to produce a good income."

Finally, Mr. Fenwick accepted his son's proposal, and agreed to communicate with the parish.

That same evening Deacon Crane tapped at the door and was admitted. Guy was at home, and sat demurely in his father's study.

"So you've got home, have you, Guy?" was his greeting, preceded by a cough. "Noah told me he saw you go by the store."

"Yes; Noah is a great friend of mine," returned Guy, with a smile. "I hope he is well."

"Yes; I am thankful to say he is. He's a good stiddy boy, Noah is; he don't go gadding about all over the world."

"Like me?" suggested Guy, with a smile.

The deacon coughed, but did not disclaim the amendment.

"Have you lost your place?" he asked.

"Mr. Saunders has given me a year's vacation," answered Guy.

"Humph!" said the deacon. "That's rather

hard on you. You may find it difficult to get a place round here."

"I shall not try for one. I am going to stay at home with father part of the time."

"You're pretty young to retire from business," sneered the deacon.

"I shall be glad to have Noah call on me."

"I don't approve of Noah bein' idle. He's helpin' me in the store, out of school."

"By the way, Deacon Crane," said the minister, who was enjoying in his quiet way the deacon's misunderstanding, "I am glad you called in. I want to consult you about church matters. Guy wants me to ask for a younger man to share with me the responsibilities of parish work, as a colleague."

"Mr. Fenwick," said the deacon, greatly surprised, "you must be aware that the parish cannot afford to pay two ministers. As it is, we are cramped by our agreement to pay you a thousand dollars."

"For that reason I propose to relinquish my own salary. There will be but one salary to pay."

"But," said the deacon, inexpressibly surprised, "how are you going to live?"

"Perhaps I ought to mention that a relative has given me twenty-five thousand dollars. I can live on the income arising from that."

Deacon Crane looked at the minister with greatly increased respect, for he set high value on worldly prosperity.

"Why, that makes you a rich man, Mr. Fenwick," he said.

"Indeed, I feel so."

"But I didn't know you had any rich relatives."

"Nor I, till to-day."

"Do you mind telling me who has given you this handsome fortune?"

"Guy," answered the minister, briefly.

"I didn't come here to be made a fool of!" said the deacon, angrily, half rising in his chair.

"No one has tried to make a fool of you," returned Guy, quickly. "I have been very fortunate, and can well afford to give my father twenty-five thousand dollars. He is anxious to get time to write a commentary on the Gospels, and so I have induced him to ask for a colleague."

"Is this really true, Guy?"

"You can rely upon it, Deacon Crane. Father may have occasion to consult you about the investment of his money."

"I'll be very glad to oblige him," said the deacon, generously. "When will he come into possession of the amount?"

"Next week."

"I congratulate you heartily, Guy," said the deacon, very cordially. "I always thought you were a smart boy."

"I am sorry you don't want Noah to come to see me. I have brought him a gold watch from New York."

"I'll send him right over," said the deacon, briskly. "He thinks a sight of you."

"I am glad to hear that. I shall always be glad to do him a good turn."

"I guess I must be goin'," said the deacon, who was anxious to spread the wonderful news.

"Well, father, did you see Guy?" asked Noah, when his father entered the store.

"Yes, I did."

"Is he out of work?"

"He needn't work any more as long as he lives," said the deacon, solemnly. "Guy's come home with a fortune. He's just given his father twenty-five thousand dollars."

Noah listened with eyes and mouth wide open.

"Do tell, pa!" he said.

"Yes. Guy's an awfully smart boy. He's brought home a gold watch for you, Noah, and he'll give it to you when you go over."

"I'll go right over, pa."

"And I am willin' you should be with him as

much as he wishes. Take my advice, Noah, and make him your intimate friend."

"You bet I will, pa!"

"Don't use that expression, Noah! Remember you are a deacon's son."

In a few weeks the changes already hinted at were effected. Mr. Fenwick was provided with a colleague, but not the deacon's relative, and had begun work on his commentary.

At the end of a year Guy entered the office of the New York correspondent of John Saunders, whom he will eventually succeed. He makes a good business man, and Mr. Saunders has never had occasion to regret the interest he has taken in the young American.

THE END

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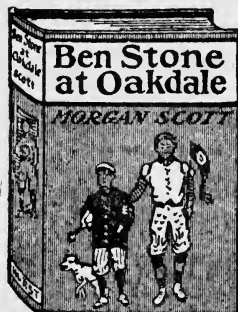
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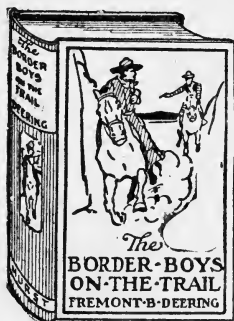
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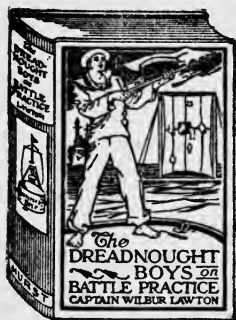
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